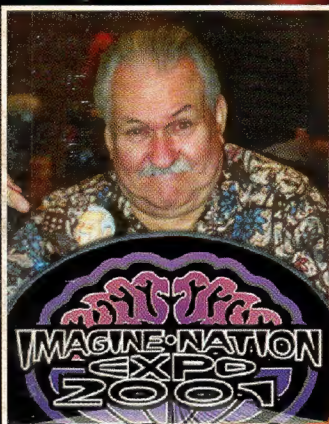
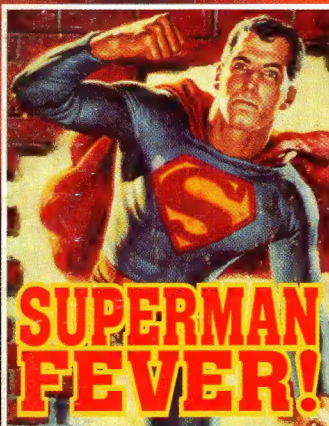
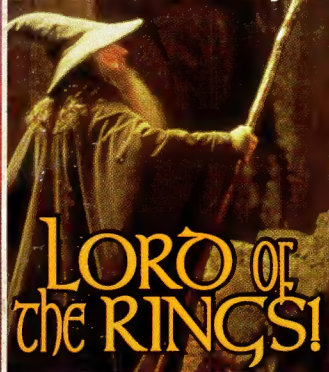


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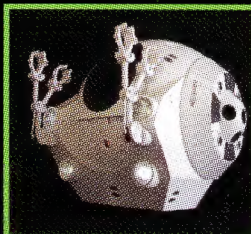


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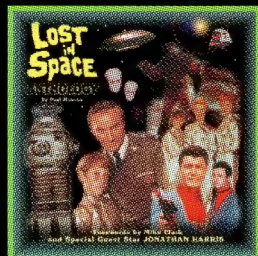
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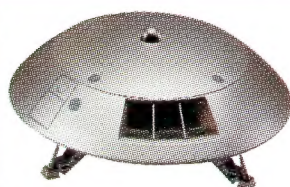
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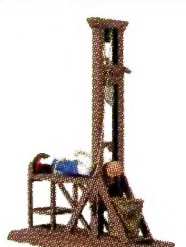
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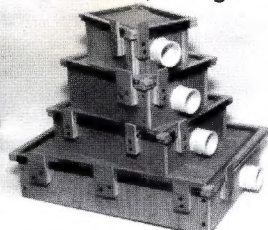
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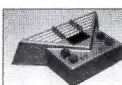
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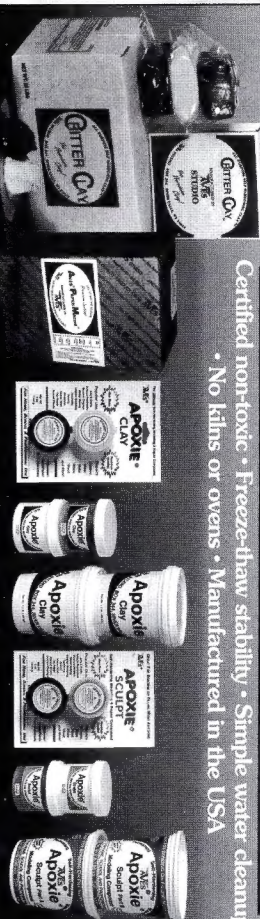
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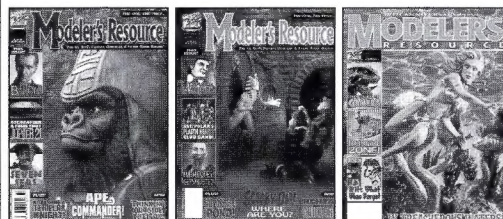
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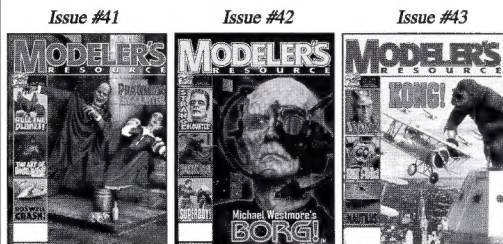
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Owned & Published by:
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Subscriptions
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4120 Douglas Blvd, #306-372, Granite Bay, CA 95746-5936 modres@quiknet.com.

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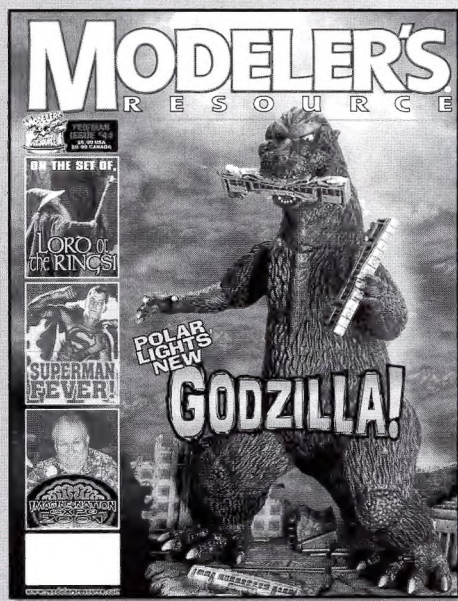
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12

Godzilla!

Bill cranks it up a notch with this latest offering from the folks at Polar Lights!

Boxed pictures: Gandalf lights the way through Moria (© 2001, New Line Cinema, Pierre Vinet); Aurora Superman box art; Bob Burns at ImagiNation (Jim Bertges).

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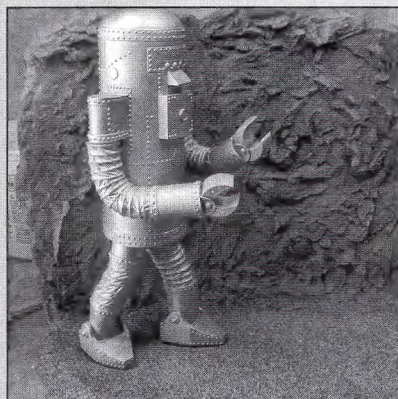
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Creating a Better Bat!

Join Norm as he creates an awesome Batman™ diorama with a converted Dracula-to-Joker figure!



32

Commando Cody!

A true Rocket Man and one of the villains he fought!

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Kong Part Two!

The second part of Hilber's Kong-sized diorama hits the pages of MR this issue!



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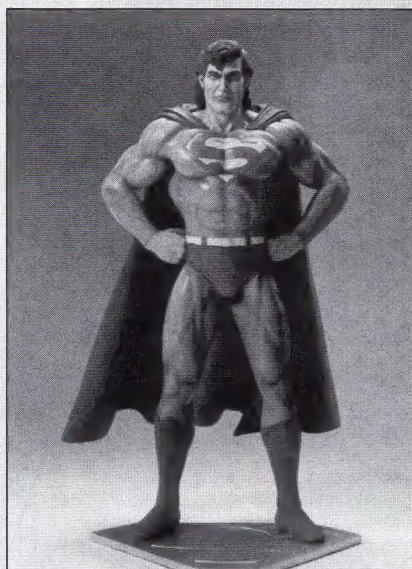
Sculpting Godzilla

James Groman takes you through the process!

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Kits That Time Forgot

It's Superman™ Fever and a trip back in time!



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Just the Same Way?

N

ot too long ago, I took my ten-year-old son to see an outdoor rock concert featuring John Waite, Peter Frampton and Journey.

It's definitely true that as we get older, we oftentimes yearn for the "good ol' days" of our youth. For many of us, those days were filled with excitement and living life to the fullest. We had little-to-no fear and truly believed that we would live forever (at least 40 or 50, which seemed to be an eternity away!).

My son and I enjoyed the evening out listening to these three groups perform, while we took in the sights of the concert only a few rows back from center stage. Whether you know it or not, Steve Perry is no longer fronting for Journey. The person who is now singing for Journey, Steve Augeri, sounds similar and, I guess it can be argued that he also looks similar to Perry - from a distance. I enjoy many of the songs that became big hits for Journey under the guiding voice and songwriting talent of Steve Perry. Listening to Journey that day though, helped me to realize that they will never be what they were with Steve Perry. That's not to take away anything from Steve Augeri because he's a decent singer in his own right. What he does NOT bring to Journey though, is the originality, emotion and the ability to draw people in through his vocalization. Perry literally painted a visual picture as he sang the tunes that became forever connected to Journey. Steve Augeri, as the replacement singer, brings his own "show" to the stage and, unfortunately for me, it's a bit lacking because of my own bias within me. I can't help but compare everything to what came before, in the form of Steve Perry.

Life is like that, isn't it? Try as I might, I cannot recapture the same level of excitement and fervency in my model-building that I once possessed as a kid. In some ways, the "magic" that drew me into modeling has been tempered. Yet, what I have come to understand now is that I am more relaxed in some ways with modeling overall. Even though nothing stays the same in life (especially a rock group), there are ways to compensate for the change.

With modeling continuing to change and adapt itself to today's market, what is interesting to note is that some companies will do well and others will not. That's a given. However, ALL companies will have to look at their revenues for this year as they decide what they



will do for the next. Will they decide to nix a model or two to be on the safe side or will they throw caution to the wind and continue to produce products that they want to see out there, irrespective of what may occur in the consumer marketplace? A company that does the latter most likely will not be around that long.

I know that many of us would love to have many aspects of our youth back, including the variety models that were introduced to us by Aurora, Revell, Monogram and others. We just can't help it. We are forever looking toward the "prize" that eludes us. If only we could get THAT model, we think. That would be it! That would be the culmination of years of searching! Our modeling endeavors would be complete! Not so, because there would always be something else that we "need" to have.

We just can't go back it seems. Whether it's our favorite rock group, or the hobby that we thoroughly enjoy, what we've found is that we only grow as we reach for the future. What does IT hold for us? It holds whatever we want it to hold.

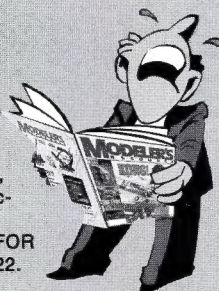
Thank God life is ever changing. Whether we realize it or not, most of us need the newness of change so that we don't become stagnant. Can you imagine how tiring it would be if you continually lived in that "honeymoon" period with your spouse? It would be exhausting. Fortunately, we grow solid within ourselves over time and we relax and understand that as life changes, it can get better. Whatever changes are in store for the modeling industry, I'm convinced it will be as good as we allow that change to be in our own modeling efforts. Enjoy this issue and we'll see you promptly, the first week of March!

Fred

Ah! We Goofed!

• In last issue's "Coming at You!" section, page 46, we listed the wrong PO Box # for Posthumous Productions/John Apgar. The correct address is: John Apgar, PO Box 59, Flanders, NJ 07836. Also, we failed to let folks know that Posthumous Productions has made resin castings available of the missing tree and palm leaves that came with the original Aurora issue of King Kong, but hasn't been seen since! For more information on their product line and pricing, please contact them at the above address for the complete information.

• Also, the phone number listed in the "UNIVERSAL HORROR KITS FOR SALE" ad on page 11 was incorrect. The actual number is 818.822.7922. Please use this number when contacting them.



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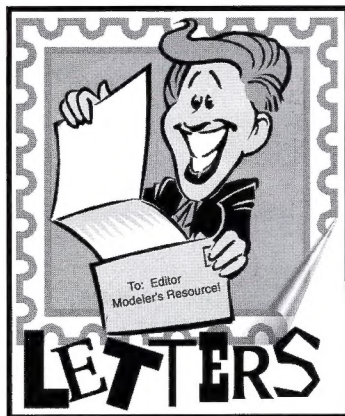
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"A Lot to be Thankful For"

Dear Fred,

First of all, I'd like to apologize for writing with a pencil. I'm at the airport ready to go see my son in Portland, OR when I started to read your (From the Publisher in) Issue #43 and I had to write back.

I haven't written a letter by hand in three years, but this time it is essential considering nowadays people don't seem interested in using their hands to write or model (since computers came along).

The reason I'm writing is because you've touched me with what you said (in) that 911 editorial. For some strange reason, people seem not to be as thankful for what they have anymore. 911 painfully reminded us how precious life is and how important it is to help others, not only for them, but also for ourselves. I was introduced to modeling by a friend five years ago and I got hooked. I did one model then and had to stop for many personal reasons. Although I don't build any models, I subscribed to *Modeler's Resource*® and AFM magazines and I tried very hard to get all the back issues and last August, I finally did (thanks to ebay). I read them every day, but couldn't find time to build a model again. Well, in October 2000, I lost my job of six years, all my close friends moved away, I lost my house and my ex moved to Portland with my son. I was absolutely devastated. A couple of months later, I found another job earning a third of what I used to make, but that was enough to buy tickets every two weeks to see my two-year old son. I had savings, so financially, I was somewhat okay.

Being by myself and with depression wanting to kick in, I finally got my magazines, my twenty or so models I collected through the past five years, and started building and painting.

You have no idea how meaningful that became. I felt a sense of pride and accomplishment every time I finished a model. Psychologically speaking, it was a boost to my ego, as well as the amount of joy I got from it. I have built nine models so far and I tried not to show them off too much because I do them for myself, not to be approved by anyone else.

I love modeling. I went to Imagine-Nation in Vegas (my first show) and I looked like a child in a candy store. Although I couldn't buy any models, I talked to people and saw their work. Wow!!!

The reason that I'm telling all this is that your magazine helped to keep me sane with all the stuff that was going on

in my life. Today, I have a great salary, my ex is moving back to Phoenix and I can proudly say I'm a modeler. I have a lot to be thankful for. Thank you very much.

Edison Goncalves, Phoenix, AZ

- That is great to hear, Edison! That is exciting that you are into models and that your salary is where you need it to be. More than all of that though, is the fact that your son will be back in your neighborhood! That is absolutely terrific. Thanks for taking the time to write and for sharing. We're glad that, in some way, our magazine provided a leg up for you.

Thanks also for the pictures you sent of your models. We'll put them in our "Models on Parade" file. Your Swamp Witch, as well as the others, look really great!

"Quick Question"

I have a quick question regarding antiquing stain. I'm new to the whole arena of garage kits and recently got hooked. After reading some issues of your magazine I noticed that some of you use antiquing stain in order to get that certain look. There is one model that I would like to start work on and I think that applying an antiquing stain to it first will give me the look that I'm looking for. I've searched your magazine and other on-line resources in hopes of finding some to purchase. I've yet to track some down. I would appreciate it if you could point me in the right direction.

PS - I have sent off for a subscription for your magazine. Your magazine is the greatest and is a great resource for someone just starting off. Thanks.

James (E-mail)

- We're glad the magazine is working for you. The Bon Artiste Stains are no longer available. Not too long ago, Bill wrote an article on creating your own stain. That appeared in Issue #39. It's too long to repeat here, but this article has recently been posted on our Internet site, so folks can avail themselves of the information there. If you'd also like to purchase a back issue, they are available too.

"Jim Key: YIPPIE!!!"

Dear Fred,

I am writing in response to issue #43 (Dec/Jan) of your fine magazine. On page 5 under "Contents" you list for page 40 "A 66" Nautilus! Jim Key is back with more reality modeling on a large scale!" to which I feel the need to respond with an enthusiastic "YIPPIE!!!"

Once again I sit back and read through another Jim Key produced masterpiece! At first it was his 1:1 Scale recreation of the Jupiter 2 and now the 66" Nautilus. The attention to detail and the extent of details is truly amazing and a pleasure to observe! Thank you for publishing that wonderful article!

On a different subject, I was wondering if you might be able to clear something up for me? As everyone knows, Polar Lights recently reissued the Aurora "Planet of The Apes" kits from the 1960s. Not only did they reissue the kits, but they apparently reissued the Aurora oval emblem as well.

I recall when I stumbled upon the Planet of the Apes reissue kits at a local

store - what grabbed my attention at the time was the "Aurora" oval. I thought to myself (somewhat in shock), "What is this?!!!" After reading the side of the box, I discovered that it was actually a Polar Lights reissue of the Aurora kit.

This is all fine, but I have to admit, I got to thinking of what would happen if they started to extend the usage of the Aurora oval to some of their other reissues? Namely, their Lost In Space line.

Upon first glance, I cannot tell an original Aurora issue from a Polar Lights reissue by looking at the box cover. When picking up the box and inspecting it, it is soon decipherable as to original or reissue. The problem I foresee is the instances where you cannot pick up the box and inspect it, namely on ebay.

If you follow original Aurora LIS kits on ebay, you will see that they can go for anywhere to \$400 and higher! Granted that is not, nor should not need be, a concern of Polar Lights, but it does concern people like myself who go to ebay in hopes of finding a long out-of-issue original Aurora kit.

I recently observed on ebay an auction for a LIS Cyclops kit and it had the Aurora Oval on the box cover. However, the seller stated that it was a reissue kit! My fears were finally recognized! If the seller did not volunteer the "reissue" information - I would have thought this was an original Aurora!

The auction did not say "who" the reissuer of the kit was: I presumed it was Polar Lights - although I wasn't aware that they had started putting the Aurora oval on their LIS line.

Can you tell me if Polar Lights has indeed begun putting the Aurora oval on their LIS reissue kits? And if they have, WHY is it necessary that they put it in the exact same location as it was on the original Aurora issues? To me, it just seems to lead to confusion more than anything else.

I know this is a VERY long letter, my apologies! If you decide to use this in your "Letters to the Editor," please feel free to summarize/edit to your heart's content! Perhaps just get to the use of the Aurora Oval by Polar Lights and its spreading to their LIS line of kits?

On a side note - I KNOW you are a modeler's magazine, but you do also seem to feature Jim Key at times and he is more of a "prop replica" builder than a modeler (I'm sure that is open to debate as to what the differences between the two might be, lol), but if you are interested in miniatures, I would like to invite you to see a very rarely known about and even less rarely seen, actual, original Fox Studio miniature of the Lost In Space Jupiter 2, but not at 4-feet, but at a 10-foot scale!

This miniature is on the original Fox blueprints along with the 4-foot miniature, yet it is most likely that this 10-foot Jupiter 2 was never used in the filming of the show! Most of the few people who knew of its concept didn't even believe it was ever built!

I just wanted to make you aware, if such a miniature peaks your curiosity, that you can see it by visiting my website at <http://Jup2.com/> and going to the "10-foot Jupiter 2" section.

This rings of "self-promotion" I know, but I am really only passing along this info to you because of your continuing use of Jim Key replica projects for

your magazine and I thought it would most likely be of interest to you.

Once again, my apologies for such a long letter, my congratulations to you and your wonderful magazine that I enjoy and thanks again for presenting us another Jim Key masterpiece!

Sincerely, Mike Kickham (E-mail)

- Thanks for your compliments on the magazine and on Jim Key's wonderful articles. We're very pleased that he is submitting articles to the magazine. Because of my personal love for props and movie-related miniatures, his articles offer a good deal of insight and, as you noted, Jim is extremely dedicated to bringing out the detail in each replica that he creates. I'm glad you and many others are enjoying his presence in the magazine. We have a number of new articles from Jim, which will be showcased in upcoming issues. I'm sure you'll enjoy them.

With respect to Polar Lights and their use of the Aurora logo, you'd probably have to ask them the particulars, however, I can tell you that of the LIS kits I have that have been reissued by PL, all of them have the Polar Lights oval, not the Aurora logo. It's possible that the kit you refer to on eBay was actually a recast.

I see your point about what Polar Lights is doing and the possibility of getting something that is not really what it seems from an unscrupulous person/dealer. What I've noticed though, is that Polar Lights tends to have been careful about reissuing kits and in what color plastic they reissue them. In most cases, they have deliberately chosen a plastic that is not the exact color of the original issue, which has been a smart move. This preserves the credibility of the original issue as well as helping to keep people honest by not providing them with something that can be passed off as an original issue when, in fact, it is not.

The use of the Aurora logo on the POTA kits threw some for a loop, but actually, it was nice to see. Even though the original kits were produced, as you know, by Addar and with the Addar logo, I, personally, didn't mind seeing the Aurora logo present on the boxes. If they had not used the Aurora logo, they most likely would have used the Polar Lights' logo instead. I remember talking with Mr. Tom Lowe, founder of Playing Mantis, when they first began reissuing kits a number of years ago. He sent me the very first two kits to put together and test-fit and provide him with a report on how things went together. At that point, he mentioned that he had come up with the Polar Lights' logo because it essentially meant the same thing as "Aurora" (as in Aurora Borealis). I thought that was pretty cool. I know that has nothing to do with the meaning of the original Aurora logo, but I thought the connection between the two was pretty clever.





On the
Shelf

BOOK REVIEWS BY:

Fred DeRuvo

• 80 pages •
ISBN # 1-887893-25-3
SRP: \$20.00

Compiled by:
Bruce Hershenson

Available through:
Major bookstores

or
<http://www.brucehershenson.com>

Funny thing about a book like this. You might wonder why you would need something of this nature if you're a modeler. Well, I can think of at least three reasons to own this book. No, wait! Make that four reasons!

- 1) It's simply great to see some of these vintage movie posters and lobby cards in full color dating back to the original Hollywood horror classics that Chaney, Karloff, Lugosi and many others made famous.
- 2) These posters provide a wealth of information that just may come in handy when recreating these monstrous images as models.
- 3) The full color pictures give greater insight into rendering the models that are based on many of these classic horror thrillers.
- 4) The posters and lobby cards provide wonderful ideas for dioramas.

Horror Movie Posters is a book that has nearly 80 pages of reprinted, full-color movie posters, lobby cards, three-sheets, six-sheets and more. Many of the posters within are foreign posters for the

American-released films.

This is the seventh book in the series and as I flipped through it, I sat transfixed seeing movies I had not seen since I was a kid and hadn't ever heard of since! Some of these movies were just a blip on the screen for me and possibly for you as well, yet many are household names. It's nice to reminisce.

Bruce Hershenson has done something wonderful here by providing us with more than simply a catalog of movie posters as memorabilia. He has given us a type of timeline that allows us to see the evolution of the horror/monster movie.

There is no separate text, but simply that found on each lobby card or poster. What's fascinating though, is seeing the names of the same actors over and over again throughout the years connected with many movies.

Having just completed the Commando Cody model, I was intrigued to notice that one movie poster in particular highlighted the movie "Undersea Kingdom,"



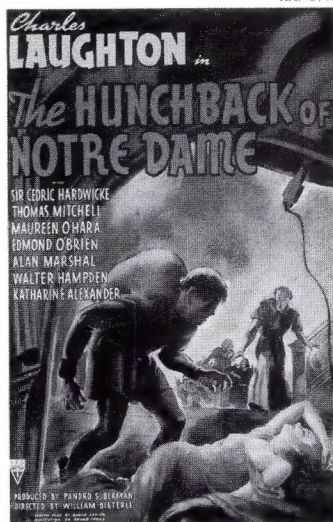
41 UNDERSEA KINGDOM, 1936



42 THE MAN THEY COULD NOT HANG, 1939



43 THE INVISIBLE MAN RETURNS, 1940, French poster



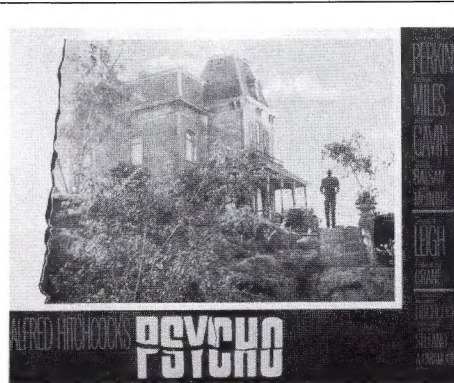
44 THE HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME, 1939



45 SON OF FRANKENSTEIN, 1939, lobby card



46 THE THIEF OF BAGDAD, 1940, Argentinian poster



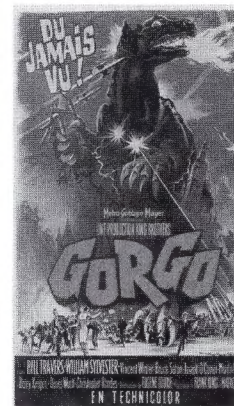
154 PSYCHO, 1960, lobby card



155 THE MASK OF THE DEMON, 1960, French poster



156 REPTILICUS, 1961, six-sheet



157 GORG0, 1961, French poster

starring Ray "Crash" Corrigan. This particular movie was produced by Republic Films, the very same folks who brought Commando Cody to the screen a decade or so later. Interestingly enough, a very similar-looking man of tin that was attacking Commando Cody in one particular serial, can also be seen going after Corrigan on the poster advertising the movie!

It also amazed me how the studios put that much effort into achieving just the right looks for their posters. We all know how differently things are done today with layout and design. Years ago, these posters were painted and lettered by hand! Often, the posters looked better than the movies they advertised!

Horror Movie Posters is a great book to add to your collection. You won't regret the purchase and besides the reasons I've stated at the beginning of this column for owning it, there's one more and it's an important one. Many of these posters and lobby cards are gone forever. Only the color facsimiles remain. Many of us will never see or touch one of these original posters and having this book is the next best thing.

Kind of reminds me of the scene from "Soylent Green" where Edward G. Robinson's character has

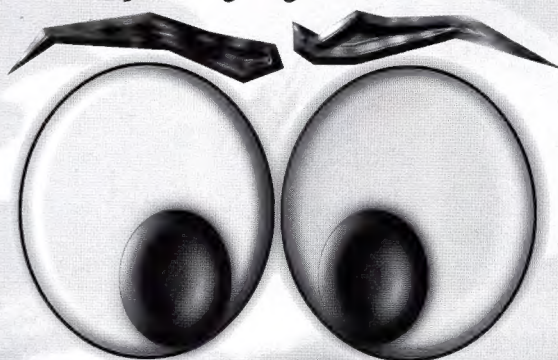
willingly signed his own death certificate. He was allowed to choose the music as well as the 360-degree panoramic movie that will accompany his last minutes prior to entering into the next life. We all know the story of how Charlton Heston's character came into the control room and saw and heard what Robinson's character saw and heard. Deer and most other wildlife had long ago become extinct. Much of what Robinson's character knew as a young boy was gone: fields of grain, clear blue skies, crystal clear running water and all the rest. When Heston's character saw it, he couldn't believe it because he had thought that Robinson's character had been making it all up with the stories he told!

One day, it'll be like that for this type of memorabilia that connects us to Hollywood of the near past and vintage filmography.

Run, don't walk to your nearest book store and ask for this book or head over to the website listed at the beginning of this column. Add this book to your collection. It'll provide lots of memories and inspire awe with the remarkable way in which Hollywood's horror legacy has changed, yet remained very much alive throughout the years.



Sculpting Your Own...



Bug-Eyed Monsters!

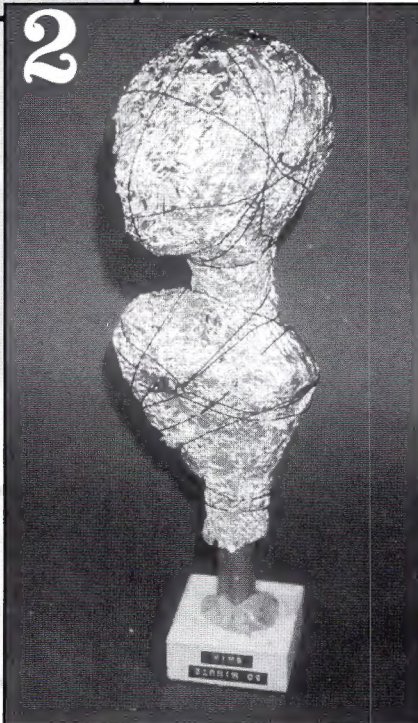
with Alex Kriefeldt

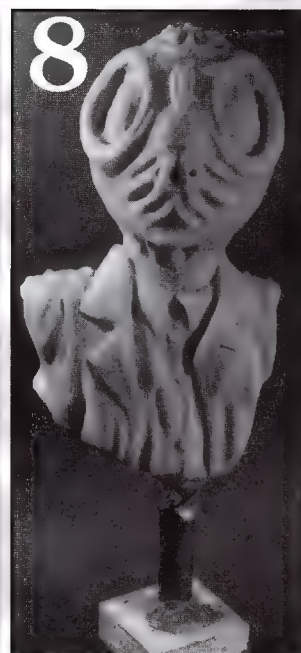
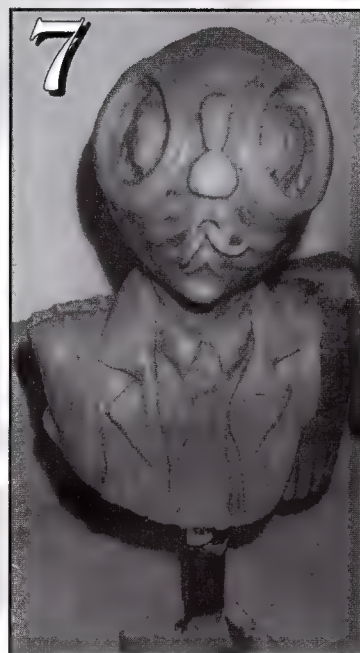
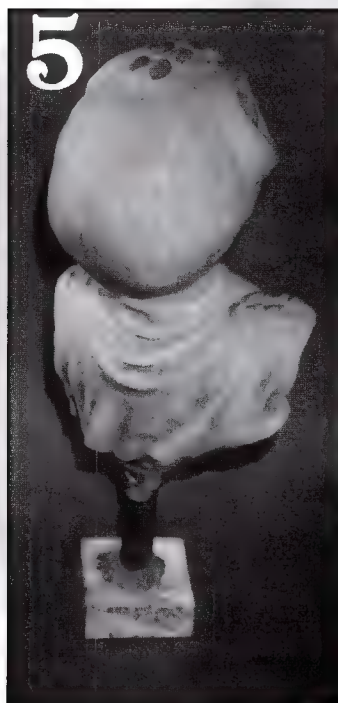
Are you thinking about a new kit? How about making one yourself? It can be cheap and fun; one such as The Fly can be done and you can even customize.

Instead of a full figure, a bust is fine. There is still a chance to try a character and for my BEM (bug-eyed monster), this bust was enough to show what the whole monster is anyway - a guy with a fly head! Plus, a bust is a classy display item - it goes well on any piano.

An armature was helpful for this model. It made the job simpler and cheaper because it saved clay and it provided a firm foundation. Mine is a trophy base with a copper pipe (*photo 1*) attached and wrapped in layers of foil and steel wire windings. It built it up and has the basic shape of the model (*photo 2*). I slipped it off the pipe when I was done and glued it to the sanded pipe. The armature was under-sized, so you can add a $\frac{1}{4}$ or more of clay.

Once the clay was on, I outlined the shape of the head from the front and then from the profile. I made the chin





to be the main landmark. I made the chin human and then drew a line up and back down the middle of the head as a reference for the eyes and head features (*photo 3*). After establishing the profile and front view, be sure not to change them. This way, you can fill in the rest and have an easier time since you have a framework. Next, I shaped the face more (*photo 4*).

The bumps on the top of his head were baked pieces and then pushed into the clay. I used thin rolls of clay to make a ridge around each bump (*photo 5*). I did the same roll of clay for the eye-socket ridges. His eyes are made from separate pieces and I dug out the eye sockets first. I took the eyes out after they were shaped to the sockets and then baked them at 275° (*photo 6*) and sanded them.

The original mandibles that I liked ultimately became tusk ones. Even though the wiggly ones (*photo 7*) looked better to me than tusk-type and in the sucker hole, I figured I had better do the tusks because it made more sense as far as "entomology," and I use the term loosely. The mandibles, antenna and sucker were baked and positioned in the unbaked torso and became locating holes (*photo 8*). Now the Fly was baked.

The claw was something I wanted to make, but wasn't sure how it would be attached. I did the claw and tie separate so they are posable on the completed model. I made a low-budget plaque. Ah ha...I'll make the claw on its own base and plaque is optional. This way you can repose the claw. Per the movie, the claw should be his left, but the claw looked better to me when used as the right hand. So I made a left-hand claw, but used it as a right. The beauty of the base is that you can also make it properly left-handed if you so desire.

For a guide I used Lunar's The Fly, but the fun was customizing. I made wiggle antennas instead of the symmetric, flat ones of the Lunar. I left off the head-hair texture because I would rather add hair. That "thing" between his eyes that looks like an exclamation point is similar to the Lunar, but I added some light ring-shapes on the lower part.

Making this model was worthwhile and enjoyable. The total part count was 25. The metallic head came out as the best result and I liked a green theme. I used blue, white and black in a patchy undercoat with layers of Jade Green, silver and white spray with brushed-on silver and bronze. Then came light brown wash with silver spray on top and a little more bronze and silver brush. I used Silver Chrome Trim for the mandibles and as highlight reflection on the nose with a black wash to show the ring shapes. The fur on the claw is brownish-green with white and silver highlights (*Main Photo*).

I do hope that you too will make your own model. You can make The Fly or make up your own BEM from outer space. So, before you rush out and buy a new kit, why not make one? ... Look out behind you...it may be a Bugged-Eyed Monster! Feel free to buzz me at agk65@aol.com.





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Bill Craft

INDESTRUCTIBLE!

INCREDIBLE!

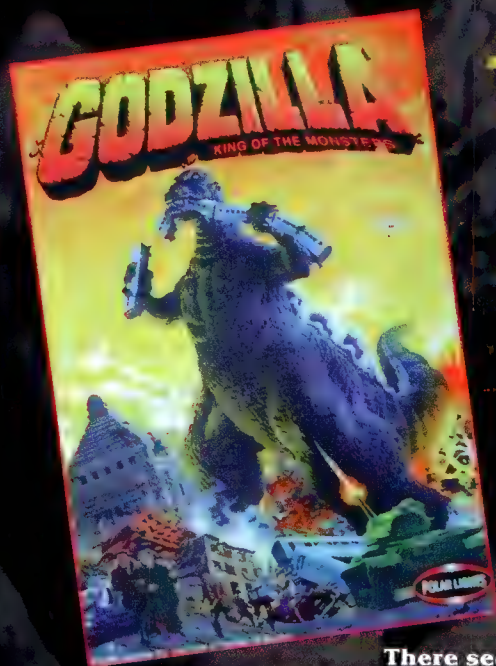
INVINCIBLE!

**POLAR
LIGHTS,
NEWEST!**

GODZILLA!

KING OF THE MONSTERS!

GODZILLA
KING OF MONSTERS!



(RIGHT) Here are all the parts laid out. Take note that each square on the grid background is one-inch square. This will give you an idea of just how big this kit is.

(LEFT) Front cover box art.

There seems to be no getting around the fact that Godzilla continues to be an icon for the ages. Most people scoff at Japanese giant monster films and simply label them as kid's stuff. But the fact remains that Godzilla and all the hundreds of other giant creatures from the land of the rising sun have endured the test of time and there seems to be no end in sight to their continued presence. Laugh if you will, but when many other so-called movie icons have gone the way of the dinosaur, Godzilla will continue to be one of the most recognized names in the annals of film history.

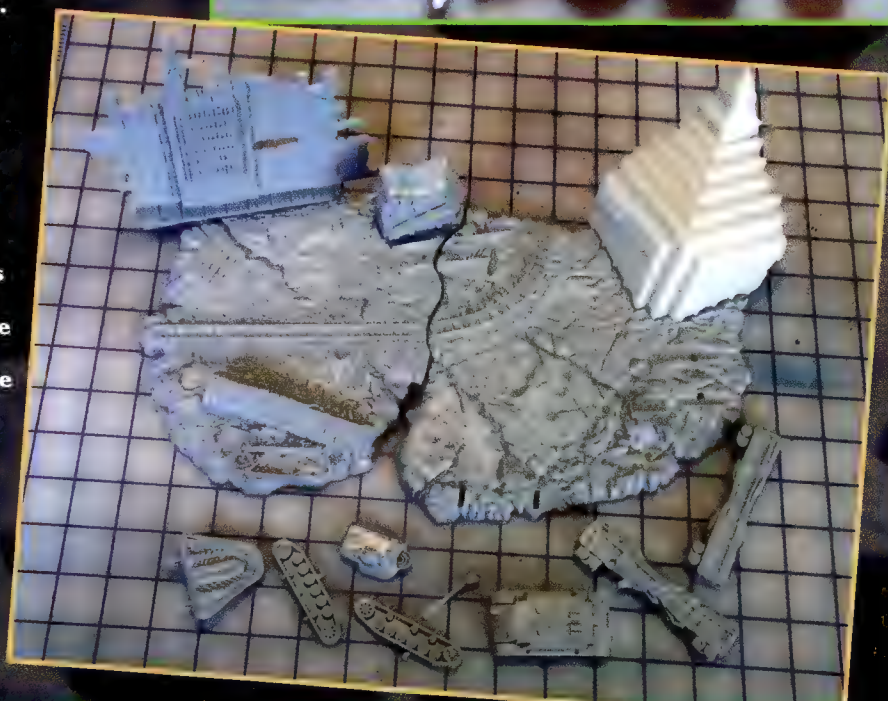
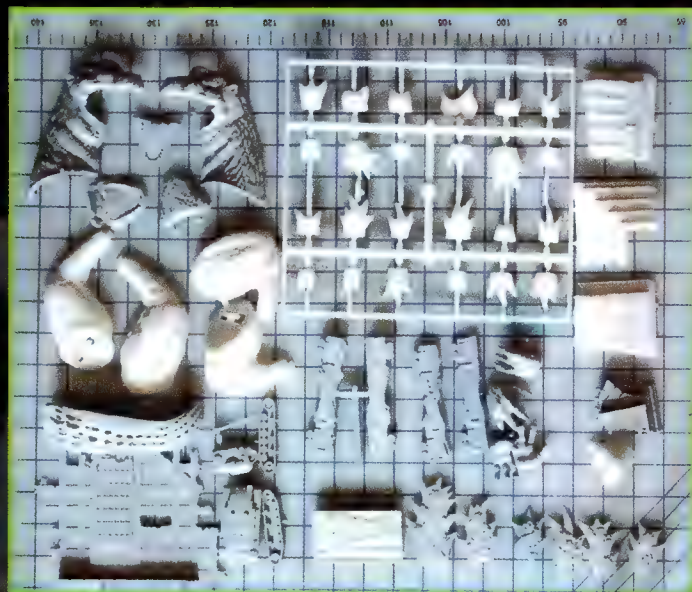
With that being said, let me introduce to you Polar Lights' newest presentation. A colossal styrene kit of the king of the monsters, Godzilla. The kit, sculpted by Jim Groman, has 76 parts and stands about 16 inches tall when completed. The monster's likeness is taken from the original "Godzilla" film made in 1954.

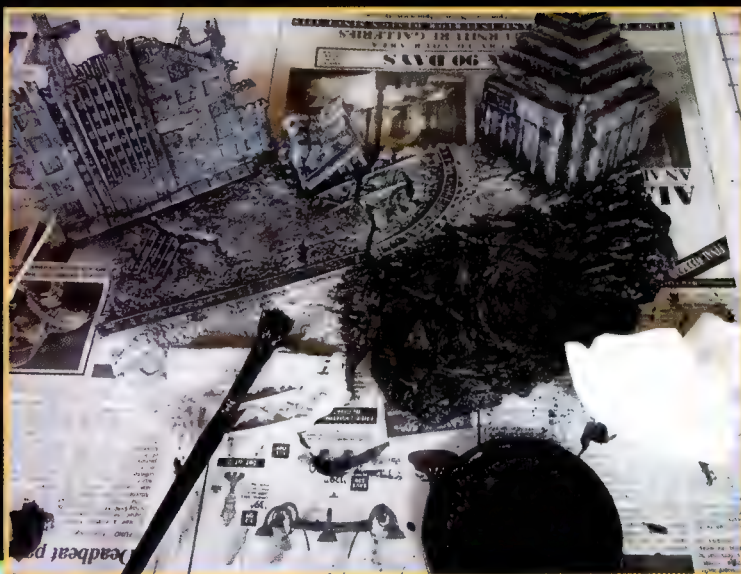
A general note about styrene kits. Before the assembly of each section, carefully remove the parts to be used from the styrene trees. I use a small wire cutter. Sand away any flashing and test fit the parts before gluing them together.

Secondary note. The kit I received was an advance test shot that was cast in medium grey styrene. A few parts were cast in white. Since I do not know at this time the exact color of the styrene for the entire kit, I will proceed as if the entire kit was in the grey color.

THE BASE:

You could not ask for a better playground for Godzilla. Crumbled buildings, wrecked train, a vintage Japanese tank and, of course, the nameplate logo which is taken from the American advertising art.





I began with the base so I could save the big beastie for last. I glued the two main floor sections of the base together first, followed by the damaged buildings.

Since the playground is in a dreadful state at this time thanks to Godzilla, I decided to keep it dark and dirty. No squeaking clean structures here folks. Bright colors simply don't work here.

I antiqued the entire playground with black stain. Instead of just wiping off the mixture in sweeping strokes, I blotted off the stain. This gave the buildings especially, a more distressed look.

The detail on the base is what I call, drybrush heaven. A lot of raised detail. I used light chocolate, rust and white on almost the entire base. In a few spots such as the train rails, I used a rust metallic rub-on. I choose to dry-brush the train cars in silver and then airbrushed transparent blue over them.

A bit of light airbrush fogging with white sprayed from one angle over the base gave me a nice effect. I then went in with transparent shading grey in all the recesses for a final contrasting effect.

The tank was antiqued black and then given an airbrush treatment of transparent green. The treads were rendered in black. The entire tank was then drybrushed lightly with white.



The nameplate lettering was rendered black with a silver outline on a crimson red background. The outer edge was rendered black.

The base was now ready for its gigantic host to arrive.



GODZILLA:

I built the main body in subassemblies. This was simply due to the fact that there are so many parts. But after all, that's the fun of model building, isn't it? When I build styrene kits I like to use the superglue not only as a bonding agent, but as a filler as well. I use the thicker kind of glue as opposed to the more runny kind. This also gives me a little bit more time to position the parts together. Once the glue is hit with an accelerator and dries, you can then go in with metal files and sandpaper to smooth out the seams.





With the exception of the lower jaw, Godzilla is now completely assembled.

The main seams that the glue doesn't hide must be dealt with in another way. For this I use my ol' tried and true Magic Sculp[®]. Mix equal amounts of the two-part compound into snake-like strands and press the mixture against the seams to be joined. I use a small plastic contour tool to sculpt the mixture into the existing kit detail.

Another tip of mine that always serves me well on any kind of kit of this type, is to leave off the bottom jaw of the beastie. A lot of rendering on the

body is going to be done and if you render the teeth and inner mouth first and put the lower jaw on the critter, you may have problems with overspray and drybrushing. Save this area for last when assembling the kit. And whatever rendering process you do on the main body, follow through on the lower jaw piece.

All righty then. Zilla is all together except for the lower jaw, right? I then primed the entire behemoth with black. A simple choice here since the black will act as my recessed color.



Fin placement.



Magic Sculp is used to join the major parts together to conceal gaps.



Black primer is applied



As with the base, there is a wealth of drybrushing detail on Godzilla. My favorite color to start a Zilla rendering is Delta Ceramcoat's Cape Cod Blue. My secret is out. I then went in with the airbrush and applied a transparent green over the Cape Cod Blue. This was followed by a gentle misting of opaque light green. Just a touch. Not too heavy. The last main body application was the use of transparent shading grey in the folds of the skin and in any area that may look too bright from the previous colors. This method helps knock down any hot spots.

The fins were first drybrushed white and then airbrushed white on the tips. Transparent shading grey was used on the lower areas of the fins to blend the white applications better.

Godzilla's claws and toenails were first rendered grey and then airbrushed with white on the tips. The base of each nail and claw was airbrushed with a dark transparent brown.

Now we get the the grand finale. The flesh areas of the mouth were rendered in reddish black with white drybrushing to bring out the detail. The teeth were rendered in white with a touch of yellow. A gentle wash of orange finished them off nicely. You may now attach the lower jaw and putty in the seam. A little bit of touch-up to render the two parts together and it's done.



The eyes were rendered in yellow with a red-orange wash along the edges. A black center eyeball with a green center circle came next. The last element was two white gleam dots in the corners of the iris.



Spray down the kit with a flat sealant and once that has dried, go in with a clear high gloss on the eyes and mouth. Step back and take a look. You will be very pleased with your efforts.

This is a very impressive kit from Polar Lights. If anything the size of this piece alone is enough to get your creative juices flowing. Thanks Polar Lights. You've done it again!

The original Aurora Godzilla and the new Polar Light's Godzilla.



Questions or comments:
craftbeast@yahoo.com

2001 GEN CON GAME FAIR

August 2 - 5, 2001
Midwest Express Center
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Okay, before we get into this article, please be warned that you'll be doing a lot of walking! You'll need your best walking shoes because in a few hours, your legs will be cramping, your feet will be screaming at you and your lower back will be begging you to sit down to take a load off. Actually, come to think of it, you won't be doing any of that. We did it for you! That's the kind of dedication we put in for the readers of *Modeler's Resource*.

You know, this show, founded in 1967, promoted by Wizards of the Coast, a division of Hasbro, Inc., is a show unlike any other due to a number of things:

- 1) More than 25,000 people walked through the doors of this show, the largest gaming con in the United States.
- 2) There was a plethora of product and vendors at this show.
- 3) There were a ton of young people in attendance and they were very excited to be there and they were participating in everything that this con had to offer.

We were in Milwaukee, WI at the perfect time when this show was happening so we wanted to be sure to check it out to see exactly what takes place at a gaming show of this nature and magnitude. We were not disappointed. The only problem we experienced was the inability to see it all! We just couldn't. The event covered four separate floors of the Midwest Express Center in downtown Milwaukee and due to the crowds, it was literally impossible to take everything in within the few hours that we were able to attend. The show boasted over 600 booths with more than 225 of the world's best gaming and hobby companies in attendance. All told, they occupied 125,000 square feet of space in this show.

What we witnessed was absolutely incredible. Kids lined up in lines 50 and 60 or more deep to see their favorite celebrity and the list is a veritable "Who's Who" in the world of celebrity fandom, including, but not limited to: Billy Dee Williams, James Wesley Marsters, Hudon Leick, Alexandra Tydings, Marina Sirtis, Richard Biggs, Michael William Kaluta, Alexander McDaniel, Neal Barrett, Jr., R. A. Salvatore, Jean Rabe and a host of others available for sign-



Above: Gaming enthusiasts painting gaming figures. Not a magnifying lens in sight!
Below: Product available at the show.





Above: Cthulhu anyone? Price? Cheap.

Below: The excitement of gaming.



Below: New product, including the LOTR Card Game, and role-playing games like "Vampire, The Masquerade."



ings, pictures or just to ogle! You'll no doubt recognize some of these names from shows like Buffy the Vampire Slayer, Xena: Warrior Princess, Babylon 5 and others.

There were auctions, an art show, Hong Kong Cinema, Computer Gaming, Costume Contest, Games Library, Miniature Painting Workshop and Contest, Theme Days, Tournaments and a ton of other activities and sights, too numerous to name.

There was a ton of things to buy, everything from real swords and costumes to models and accessories to cards, gaming figures, computer role-playing games to books to posters to...just about anything that you can think of if it has anything to do with the gaming industry!

Here's a question for you: How is it that so many kids are involved in this hobby; a hobby where they paint items that are smaller than the length of your index finger and they do so with gusto and excitement, but it is difficult to get those same kids involved in the model-building end of the hobby?

The excitement at this event was real. It was tangible. One very large room on the first floor was set aside just for the gaming tournaments and it was absolutely full to overflowing. Everywhere you looked, you saw people involved in one type of game or another. Young people were here spending their own money on games, cards, trinkets, costumes and anything else that they found exciting. They were dropping \$15 to \$20 per picture just so they could get a signature of their favorite celebrity. This was heaven for a lot of these people and the kids who attended.

It would seem that these kids don't mind stepping up to the plate, picking up the brush and painting these tiny gaming figures for the latest game. They certainly don't appear to mind the possibility of going blind as they cross their eyes to paint a figure that's only an inch and a half tall! The interesting thing? These figures really look great! A lot of these kids have the desire and talent to paint, but it simply has not crossed over into modeling yet. Or maybe, we in the modeling industry have not done enough to provide the interest for these kids to "come on over" as Shania Twain would say.

Well, all we can do is keep working on it and try new things to get kids interested in modeling as a hobby. Cars are still their biggest interest, where modeling is concerned and it's difficult, if not impossible, for the resin end of the garage kit industry to compete with those prices. Maybe we need to try harder to make things more affordable and I know some have been trying to do that. Maybe we need to produce kits that kids want to see. Maybe we need to start more clubs in our area and see if it can grow from there.

In this day and age, it is really nice to see a convention that pulls in close to 30,000 people with vendors aplenty and tons of kids underfoot. Hobbies aren't dead, by any stretch. Kids go after what they want to go after. For the modeling industry to survive, it needs to capitalize on what kids like, plain and simple, and it needs to endorse their abilities as gamers and/or hobbyists. We're glad we attended this event in spite of the sore muscles. It was an eye-opener and a real learning experience.



Being a big Batman fan, I was very excited when Fred asked me to do a conversion article based on the current reissues of Batman and Robin by Revell. Fred also wanted them placed in a diorama. However, I had one small problem...no villain! What to do? Thanks to another reissue, Dracula by Polar lights, I would not only have a villain, I'd have Batman's Arch Enemy, the Joker! I began to visualize a scenario for the diorama. The Joker would be trying to blow up Gotham City and the Dynamic Dual would step in to save the day!

Although this will be a diorama, I will only be covering the conversions of Batman and Joker in this article. The painting of the figures and diorama buildup will be in a future issue.

Before starting the conversion, I needed to evaluate exactly how and what would be converted. In order to transform Dracula into the Joker, I needed to sculpt Dracula's face into the likeness of the Joker, make some small clothing alterations and reposition his arms. I wanted Batman to look more menacing than the comical look he

comes with, so I decided a resculpt of Batman's face was in order. Time has taken a toll on the Batman mold; details are almost lost on his body. Some new detail sculpting was in order. On checking his body proportion, I realized his arms and legs were almost the same size. Therefore, adding muscle mass to the legs was a must and I would also reposition his right arm. Looking at the kit-supplied cape, I knew I had to change it. In my opinion, the cape is much smaller in size for the scale of the figure. I decided to try a technique that I'd been thinking about for sculpting the cape. This was the perfect opportunity. On Robin I would only have to do a bit of reshaping of his cape. His proportions were right and details on the figure have held up pretty well. His small kit-supplied base would work well into a larger scene around it.

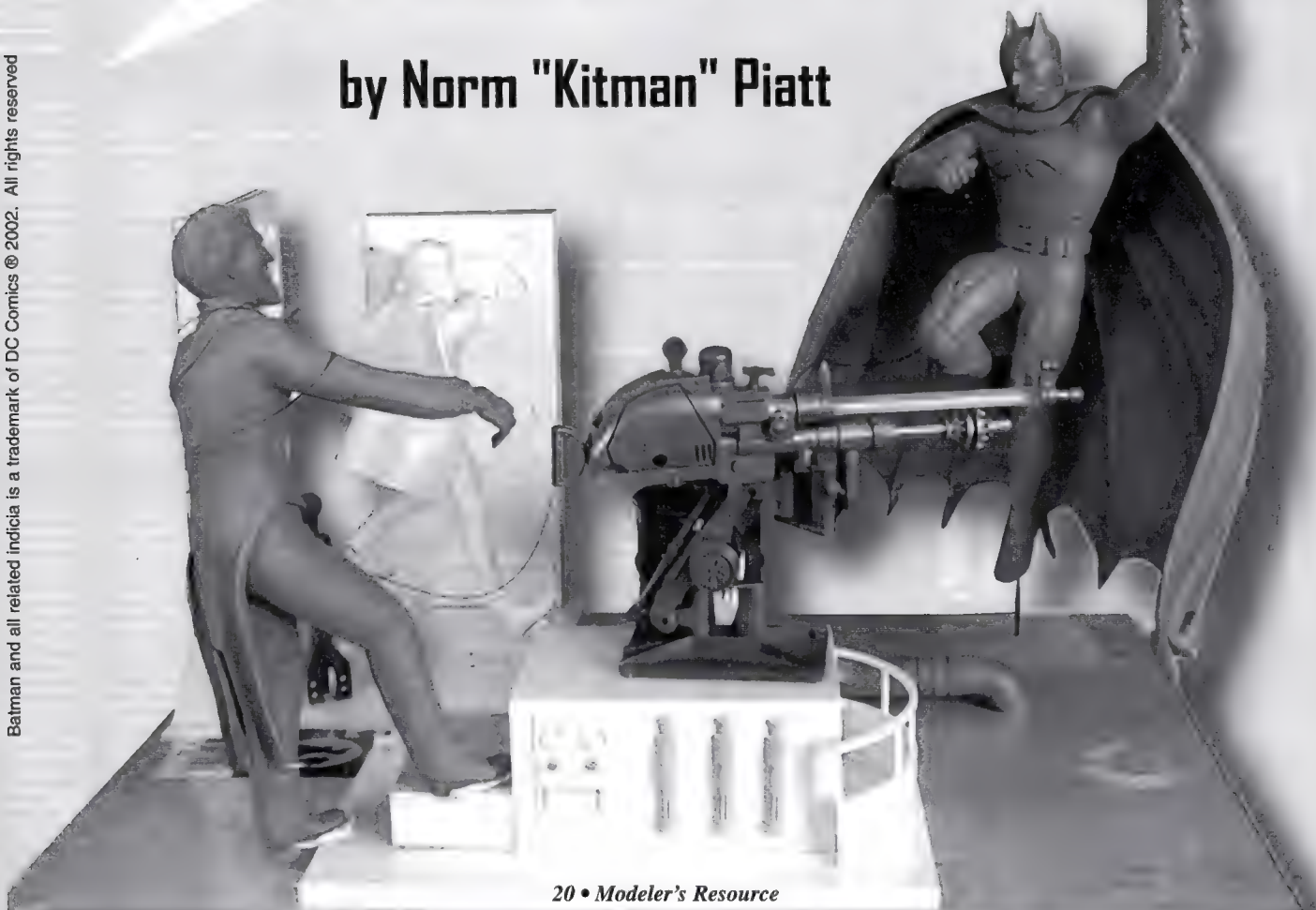
Here's an idea of what the diorama will look like. The whole scene would come together with Robin pulling the switch to stop the Joker from firing his ray gun aimed at Gotham. Batman would be dropping in from above on his Batline to help

CREATING A BETTER BAT!

• A Batman & Joker Conversion •

by Norm "Kitman" Piatt

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Above: Batman head takes shape. Right: Template for Joker's Flower on lapel.

stop the Joker. In shopping around, I found the Star Wars ray gun at my local Toys-R-Us™ on sale for a dollar and some change. While some accessories came from my parts box, the rest of the scene was built from scratch.

Now that I had it all visualized and with most of the supplies in place, I began my conversion work.

The Figures:

In the resculpting of the Joker and Batman heads, I made the mistake of assuming they were symmetrical when they were not. So, after much work was already done on the two heads, I realized the symmetry was off. I decided to trash my work and start over again on the heads. This was a lesson well learned; always check the piece before you start work to make sure it's symmetrical or you'll end up doing a lot of extra work!

The Joker:

Using reference material I gathered from comic books, I began to convert Dracula's face. First assembling his head together, I then began removing much of the facial details with my hobby knife. His cheeks, mouth and forehead were taken down to allow room for putty work. I narrowed his nose and chin to make them pointier. Next, adding putty, I roughed in the general shape of his face, making it a bit longer at the chin. Once I had the overall shape, I sculpted in his new lips and teeth. Flattening out a small ball of putty, I placed it in position for the teeth. Using the blade edge of my sculpting tool, I cut the putty into the shape of his teeth. (Keeping your tool slightly wet is very important while doing fine details like this.) Rolling out two thin lines I added the lips around his choppers. I sculpted in the laugh wrinkles and crease around his mouth, eyes and the sides of the face. It sure was a lot of fun seeing the transformation take place! Dracula's eyeballs are like two little balls that stick out; I cut these off to flatten them out a bit. I wanted a downward angle to the eyes to help create an evil look, so I cut the back corners open and added putty to the fronts.

The resculpting of Dracula's hair was the final



The process of converting the Joker.



Cape pulled from buck.



Carved Balsa Foam buck.



Finished Cape.

step of transforming him into the Joker. Removing the front hairline and creating a new Joker style hairline is a must, as well as adding more hair to the sides and a couple of loose strands to the front. Using an old toothbrush or an old stiff paintbrush, you can blend into the established hairline pattern. I primed the head in gray and checked for any corrections to be made. After some adjustments to the final look, I set it aside. (A side note... I allowed the putty to dry between each of the steps before going on to the next.) Placing the head on a wooden (coffee stirring) stick and setting it in a block of Styrofoam, allowed me to view my work from all angles.

Next came changing Dracula's suit into the Joker's costume. To make his coat collar more pronounced and add a shirt collar, I cut a flower from .10 sheet stock plastic. The flower was laid out in pencil and cut with a #11 X-Acto™ blade. I bent it to shape and superglued it onto the collar. I also added the coattails to his suit. I rolled out a thin layer of Aves with a rolling pin, placing the putty between two sheets of plastic. (I used a plastic sandwich bag cut opened). Coat the plastic with a very thin layer of Vaseline™, and then roll it out. Next, I cut the shape of the coattails. Let the putty set up for 30 minutes before removing from the plastic bag. Shape it to the figure and don't worry about it being perfect at this point, about having any extra putty. Once dry, I used my motor tool for the extra putty where the new coattail meets the coat's edge. I finished the cleaning up with sandpaper.

The Repositioning of the Arms:

Cutting and reposing plastic is great and easy; it's cut, glue and fill! Starting with The Joker's right arm, I wanted to straighten it because the Joker would be operating the ray gun. I cut the arm in half and superglued it in position and filled the hole with Aves and shaped in folds. Once it was dry, I sanded the whole thing down. I accomplished the repositioning of the Joker's hands with heat using my electric stove, but I would recommend using a heat gun. Heat the plastic just enough to make the fingers pliable and bend to shape. With Batman's right arm, it was the hand that needed to be repositioned. It required removing the hand and supergluing it in the new position. Later on, I filled in the area and sculpted in new details with Aves. I placed the hand at the correct angle to be pulling on the Batline, moving the arm from the overhead position and down in front of him so that he could be holding a Batline. This required removing the attachment tab and gluing the arm in the new position, then later filling in the area with putty and sculpting in new muscle over the shoulder.

Resculpting Batman's Head:

Again, using reference material I gathered from

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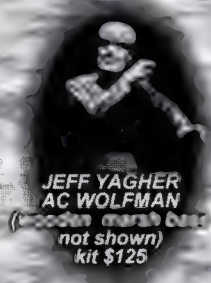
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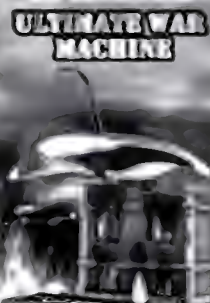
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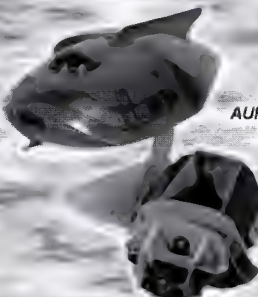
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Goodies & Gadgets



PAINT CAROUSEL

Apparently, this paint and accessories carousel has recently been reissued from the folks at the Testors Corporation under the Model Master banner.

This unit features the ability to hold three bottle sizes ($\frac{1}{4}$ oz, $\frac{1}{2}$ oz and 1 oz bottles), has an interlocking storage tray for brushes, cements, hobby tools and I guess, just about anything that is suited to your particular modeling or hobby needs.

It measures $8\frac{1}{2}$ " x 15" and retails for just under \$10.00. If you're like me, you probably don't use your space wisely enough and something like this goes a long way in helping you to become more organized. Available at your local hobby shop.

TAMIYA COLOR PAINT

Here are some new paints from the folks who have brought us models for years. These paints go on very smoothly and dry quickly. Not bad for paint right out of a can. We've had the opportunity to try a number of colors, including the gray primer and we're happy with the results.

You should be warned that these paints are not cheap, but since they're imported, that makes sense. Still, just under \$5.00 per can at my local hobby shop found me taking greater care to make sure that I didn't waste any!

There are quite a few colors to choose from and if your hobby shop doesn't carry them, ask them "Well, why not?"



TESTORS SPRAY PAINT SET



Here's another paint product that is designed for use with vehicles. What's good about this is the fact that it includes the entire system: 5 bottles of Acryl colors, 1 bottle of primer, 1 clear, empty bottle to mix your own paint and a can of propellant with the sprayer top, and one of those cheap, white paint brushes.

The paints are non-toxic and clean up with water. The propellant is ozone safe.

Admittedly, we have not given this system a whirl yet, but we have plans to, so don't be surprised if you see this system utilized in an upcoming article. If memory serves me, I believe this self-contained system retails for roughly \$20.00 to \$25.00.

This is something that your local hobby shop should carry or at least be able to order for you. You may also come across it at places like Michaels or even your local drugstore in that teeny, tiny modeling section with the same models that never seem to change.

MEDEA-IWATA

Are you sick and tired of spraying large areas of your model with that tiny cup on your gravity-feed or suction-feed airbrush? Seems to take forever, doesn't it?

Well, the good folks at Medea-Iwata have done something about that by offering this little beaut from their Baby Series! Notice the decently sized tank standing there, just waiting to be filled with your favorite paint. The gun fits nicely in your hand and is solidly built. Nothing babyish about this at all.

Chances are, you'll run out of surface before you'll ever run out of paint while painting. Another idea is to keep this filled with primer to have on hand for that assembly line process of painting all those kits you've got stored away and ready to go!

This puppy can be purchased and/or ordered through your favorite local hobby shop or arts and craft shop.

Who knows, after trying this out, you may decide that you like painting so much, you may finally decide to repaint the exterior of the house that the wife has been after you to do for a while now!



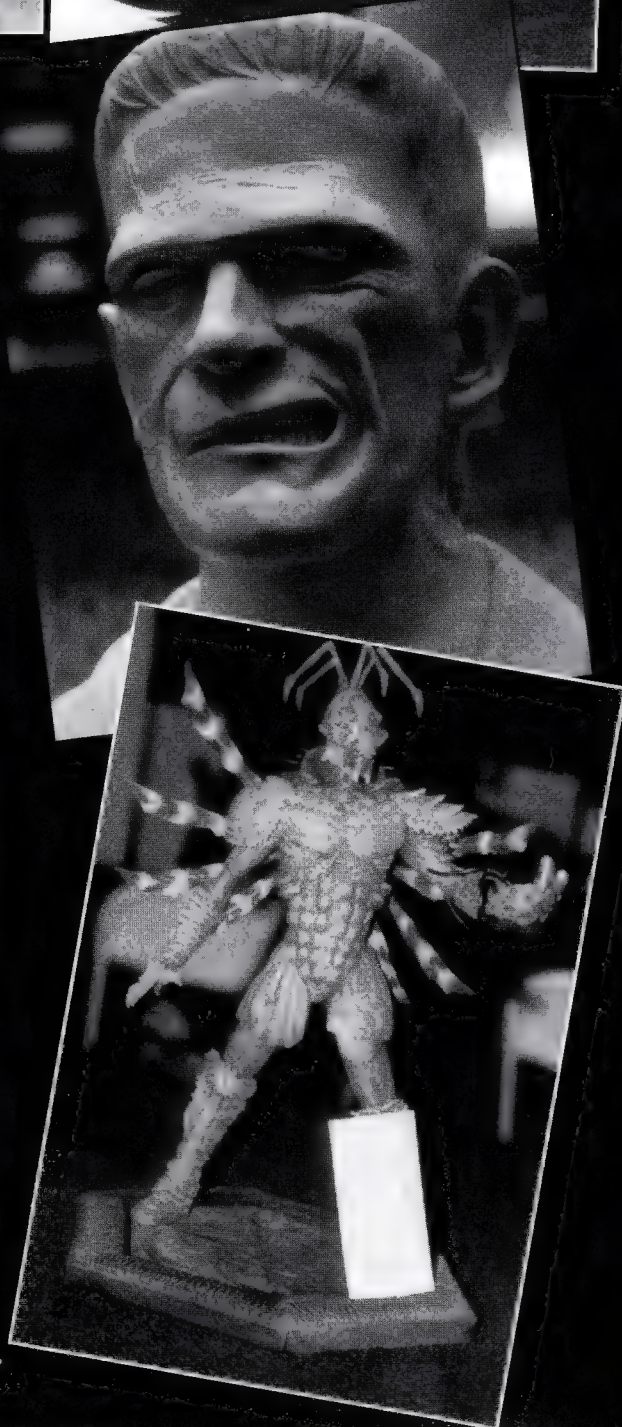


This page: Just a few of the items that could be purchased at Imagine-Nation!

Las Vegas, the Big Naughty (it used to be Sin City, but they're promoting a more family-friendly image these days. You can still do all the drinking, smoking and gambling you want, but now it looks like you're doing it in Disneyland). It's a perfect setting for nearly any kind of convention and the promoters of the Imagine-Nation Expo have wisely chosen it for the site of what is now the only "West Coast" modeling show that specializes in Science Fiction and Fantasy models. The big draw of having the show in Las Vegas was that it lured modelers and dealers from the East Coast and Midwest as well as West Coast. It was this mix of fans and dealers as well as the excellence of the contest entries and the well-run and interesting seminars that made the first Imagine-Nation Expo a success.

The good-sized dealer's room was well laid out and provided good access to the well-stocked tables. It was great to see some of our West Coast friends like Monster Cellar, XO Facto, Michael Burnett Productions, Monsters in Motion, Cellar Cast, Skeleton Crew, Skyhook Models, Monsters & Mayhem and Dimensional Designs among others plying their wares. However, the best part was to see and meet folks from far away who hadn't previously made the journey west for a model show: Diceman Creations, Posthumous Productions, Heroes and Villains, Life Force Studio, Zillion Concepts, Mojo Resin, Pinkerton FX, Amok Time, Blue Radish Studios and many more. It was an impressive array of familiar names and faces mixed with the pleasure of putting a new face with a name that has only been an Internet handle for years. I hope this trend of dealers from around the country attending this show continues as it will be good for dealers and fans alike.

Another interesting and well-planned aspect of the Imagine-Nation Expo was the presentation of talks and seminars. In a separate room with an excellent audio and visual setup, it was possible to hear talks and see demonstrations by a number of sculptors, artists and film effects and makeup artists. Greg Nicotero offered a look behind the scenes at his KNB EFX studio. Stop-motion artist Jim Danforth presented a look at his career. Ricardo Delgado showed what it took to design characters and settings for





with Las Vegas Showguy,
Jim Bertges

the animated Disney films Atlantis and Dinosaur. Jeff Yeager, William Paquet and Tony Mcvey were on hand to answer questions about sculpting. There was even a makeup demo in the dealer's room, presented by Michael Burnett.

Other guests and notable attendees included Special Effects artist Jim Appurle, John Landis and of course the legendary Bob Burns who was on hand to over see the first annual Bob Burns Model Contest. Prizes for the contest included Gold, Silver and Bronze trophies sculpted in the likeness of Bob Burns himself. There were also cash and product prizes including a \$1000.00 cash award for the top entry in the Professional category. The quality of entries was simply outstanding with even the Beginner's category providing some incredible build-ups. I think the judges deserved awards for being able to decide which of these fantastic entries was better than the others.

Also on display in the contest room were a number of items provided by Jim Danforth, Bob Burns and KNB EFX. It was possible to see an original King Kong armature from 1933. There were stop-motion models and sculptures by Jim Danforth, including models from the still uncompleted film, The Primevals. Also on display were props and maquettes from films such as Spy Kids, Mars Attacks, Army of Darkness and Day of the Dead. It was quite impressive to see all these items in person.

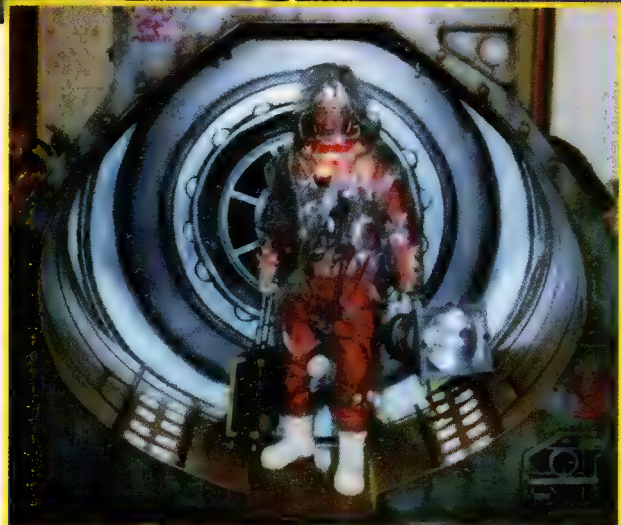
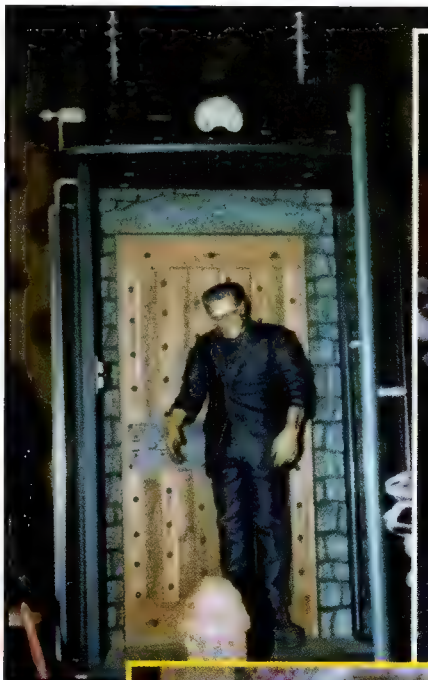
The promoters of Imagine Nation Expo did an excellent job of marketing their show in the local area with a blitz of local TV advertising and coverage by local TV news programs. They also made an effort to alert the modeling community through various publications and on the Internet. Getting the word out paid off and the show seemed well attended for an initial foray into the world of model shows. Plans are being drawn up for next year's Expo which promises to be bigger and better. Prepare now to visit Las Vegas next August and who knows, you might just win enough in the casinos to buy that kit you've been wanting.

According to the promoters, the next Imagine Nation is scheduled for the week of August 16, 2002



Above: The main dealer's room at the show

Below: Three of contest entries



THE LORD OF THE RINGS

THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING

MIDDLE EARTH in MINIATURE

Frodo (Elijah Wood) takes in the beauty of Rivendell. Through the magic of forced perspective, the miniature set (rear in the photo) looks completely life-sized.

All photos courtesy New Line Cinema © 2001



Behind the Curtain
with Jim Bertges

JRR Tolkien unquestionably created a living, breathing world when he wrote the Lord of the Rings trilogy. In fact, his writing is so rich and detailed that it has taken movie technology nearly half a century to reach a level where his creation could be properly portrayed on screen. Logically, the assumption would be that computer generated images had a great deal to do with bringing that world and those characters to life on film. However, that assumption would only be par-

tially correct. A number of characters, such as Gollum, the Cave Trolls, the Balrog and others including the vast Orc armies were created in the computer and exist only in the digital realm and on screen. But the surprising truth is that miniatures played a huge role in giving depth and detail to the environment of Middle Earth for all three films in the Lord of the Rings Trilogy.

Visual Effects Director of Photography, Alex Funke, and senior Miniature Builders, Mary Maclachlan and John Bafter, helped to shed some light on the creation and use of the incredible and complex miniatures used to bring Middle Earth to life. Alex began by explaining why director Peter Jackson chose to use miniatures so extensively instead of computer generated backgrounds.

"Peter chose, when he set out to make this movie, to use as much real photography as possible. Traditionally in films that have images of things that don't exist, those images are done as matte paintings, to paint them entirely in the digital world. He uses matte paintings where it's necessary, but he's trying to use as much real original photography as possible. He'll

have a shot of the live action foreground, let's say the hobbits walking up a hill, the real hobbits and the real hill with a bit of blue screen behind them, then there'll be a miniature behind that. Then, there's a live action background plate behind that, which was shot way down in the south island someplace and those are all stacked together to form a final shot with a bit of digital matte painting to blend it all. But the thing is that it's all real photography with the artifact and grain of real photography. He's trying to make a film that's not really a fantasy film; it's basically a war movie that just happens to have characters and things that don't exist. In every step, the issue of realism is in his head. If he needs a fortress or a cave or a cavern, he's chosen to do as much as possible in the miniature as opposed to painting it."

The computer is also a wonderful tool for assembling the various elements of a shot and enhancing images to get the most out of them. Alex explained, "These days it's easier to integrate these separate elements because in the digital world you can do a lot of blending that you couldn't do when we had to do it pho-

tochemically. You can push things around and adjust things. This is very high tech movie. We have a fantastic digital department that not only handles digital compositing and digital imaging, but also digital animation for creatures like the Balrog and the Cave Trolls. They're also doing digital grading, which is the cinematographer's dream because you can go in after you've shot the scene and electronically adjust the contrast and the color and do things you couldn't do when you were shooting because there just wasn't enough time. Now I can sit down and say I want a little less detail in that shadow, and let's make the highlight on Gandalf's hair just a little bit brighter. You essentially have complete control over the final image. It's a wonderful era we're in where you have a second chance to work on the things that you shot the first time."

Much of the detail seen on screen comes not only from the words of Tolkien, but also from the artwork of two very talented men. The art not only has served as set designs, it has also inspired model-makers to a new level of creativity. "The nature of this film is different from any other in that we have two men, Jonathan Howe and Alan Lee, who, in a sense, have created what we perceive as Middle Earth. They have spent their entire working lives creating it, painting thousands of paintings. They know exactly what Middle Earth looks like and they're the Art Directors on this movie. They are the creative directors of what stuff looks like, so if you want to know what the tower of Siroth Ungol looks like at a particular time of day, go ask Alan Lee who's painted it a thousand times. He says 'I've been there.' Meaning literally in his head and in his paint he has been at Siroth Ungol. So, we have this wonderful resource to say this is what it looks like; this is the way the light goes; this is the way it's composed. Let's take Siroth Ungol, which is in the third film, as a case in point, where Frodo was captured by the Uruk-Hai and carried up to a watchtower on the moors of Mordor. We not only have paintings so we know exactly what it looks like, but the modelers can build to a tremendous amount of detail because they have all this reference so they know what the roof looks like and how many cracks are in the wood. They know it was built by the ancient Numenorians and that it fell into disrepair and the Orcs have moved into it and it's all kind of cracked and damaged. The Orcs are not very good housekeepers; they just kind of nailed it back together. They've nailed up big pieces of iron just to cover the holes. There's a tremendous level of detail and storytelling within the miniatures. Everything's there for a reason. The modelers love it because they love to tell stories. You'll ask them what's that there for and they'll say 'Well a chunk of rock fell through there and the Orcs are too lazy so they wedged a bunch of brush in the hole just to plug it up. But this piece they know if they didn't fix that the whole tower would fall down, so they put this huge iron strap over it.' And there's no point made of it; it's all just there and adds to the richness of the shot and of the whole thing. This is what makes it so exciting to work on."

Not only do the miniatures serve as stand-alone pieces in the film, the majority of them are used to enhance and extend full-scale sets that have been built. "We have a lot of built sets. We're working now on Minas Tirith which was built at full scale so the actors can walk around, but only the first story high, everything above that has to be miniature. So when you see a shot looking up at it all, you're looking at the actors standing on the ground in front of a set that's about forty feet high and everything above that, the next three hundred feet, is a miniature to extend the set. It has to be matched exactly in terms of texture and lighting. So the goal is to not show what

Right: The Orcs attack!



Above: Director/Writer/Producer of "The Lord of the Rings," Peter Jackson



Above: Dwarf Gimli (John Rhys-Davies, middle) and Hobbits Merry (Dominic Monaghan) and Pippin (Billy Boyd)





Above: Hobbits (L-R) Sam (Sean Astin), Frodo (Elijah Wood), Pippin (Billy Boyd) and Merry (Dominic Monaghan) are surrounded.

Below: Welcome to the Shire! Gandalf makes his way into Hobbiton as Frodo's life-changing adventure begins.

you're doing. You don't want the audience to look at it and say what a nice miniature; you want them to think, 'Wow, they built Minas Tirith in full size!' If they notice your work, you're not doing it right."

Depending upon their use in the film, miniatures were built in a variety of scales. In some cases, differently scaled miniatures appear in the same shot. Model makers Mary MacLachlan and John Bafter mentioned scenes in the mines of Moria where miniature equipment in the foreground was of a larger scale than the rest of the set in order to give a sense of depth to the miniature. There was a basic scale for many of the miniature sets, but as with anything in film making, everything is changeable. "The key scale was about 1/14, which makes a normal sized man about five inches tall. Of course, you always try to make a model as big as possible, but these are miniatures of things that are in themselves so huge that you couldn't get them into a building if you made them any bigger. So, 1/14 has been our master scale, but where we have interactions like breaking things (for example, the bridge at Kazad Doom), these were built at quarter scale because that's where Gandalf is standing off the Balrog and he actually breaks the bridge. We had to have a bridge we could break apart where the rocks would fall out. Peter had a very specific way he wanted the rocks to fall out when Gandalf hits it with his staff. So we had to build it in such a way so the rocks could be individually placed and when we shot it at high speed it would all fall properly. That's at one end of the scale, making things bigger. Then, at the other end of the scale, the smallest scale is 1/166 for the tower at Barin Dour. Even then it's still eight meters tall; that represents a structure that's half a mile tall in the real world. And even at 1/166 scale, which means that an average person is about 2 millimeters tall, it still has full detail. Early on in the first film it appears in a partially built state. Sauron is building up his empire and they're hard at work building the tower at Barin Dour, so it's covered with scaffolding. These are all built with tiny pieces of wire that are thinner than a sewing needle and it still stands up. It's a gorgeous piece of miniature building. When you go to a small scale like that, it is very hard to photograph because you have to shoot it from very close distance and it's hard to keep things in focus. That's why you want to make your miniatures as big as possible so that you're not going crazy trying to keep things sharp."

"The issue is, anything that has to hold up to close scrutiny is usually built in a larger scale. The city of Minas Tirith, for example, was



built at 1/72 scale, but we had to build a section of it (a street and some walls) in 1/14 for the times we needed to get in close for the shots like Gandalf riding down the street. The major one was the set for Helm's Deep, which was built in three scales. The full size set is just down the road in a quarry and was used for nighttime combat scenes. Then, in the same quarry with the same background, is a 1/4 scale piece, which is used for a background in forced perspective shots where the actors could play in front of it and it would serve as a backdrop. There is also a 1/35-scale version for shots that need to show more area around it. The 1/35 scale was also used to fill out areas where we needed more detail. That's the only set that's actually done in three scales."

Another consideration when shooting miniatures is that the camera sees things differently than the human eye and lights can wash out some details. Effects DP Alex explained how these quirks are compensated for. "On one hand we have to over exaggerate some details like cracks or broken parts of the rock. At the same time, the painting has to be done very carefully because something that stands out on a full sized prop or wall where you could just go in and dry-brush it and do some washes on it, on a miniature, the washes have to be scaled down. They have to use many, many layers of water washes or alcohol washes to build up the texture, so the pigments settle into the little cracks so you can get them to pop out. Essentially you're building an artificial shadow. The shadow is what makes the crack show, but the crack is so small that the shadow is very tiny, but if you build up some dark pigment in there, you make the shadow darker. It has to be done to the camera, too. When the sets come in they're roughly painted, but once we get them under the lights and in front of the camera, there may be some area that needs a little more work. We call it lighting with paint instead of painting with light. There may be an area that's too dark and needs to be lightened up or a spot that's too bright when the lights hit it and we have to fog it down, that's all done for the individual shot."

"We use a palette that the camera will see so some colors will be muted and others will be deliberately made much stronger. Greens, for instance, are very hard to make look real, as you'll see in a model of Minas Tirith which is gorgeous in 1/72 scale. There are some areas where there's supposed to be grass growing in cracks and it's a flaming, fluorescent green, but photographs as a normal green color. We're compensating for the fact that the camera doesn't see green very well, so we have to artificially brighten it."

Lighting miniatures is another specialized art as Alex explained, "The size of your light source is very important; the size defines what the shadows look like. If you're outside in bright sunlight, the sun is very small, so bright sunlight produces sharp shadow lines. If you use a medium sized light up close to a model, that's not a small light source anymore; that's a big source, which makes the shadows look wrong. The main thing you're trying to do with light is to make your shadows look convincing. That has to do with how far away you put the light. In the real world you have the light source, which is the sun and the illuminated sky around the sun, so you have the hard light and the soft light. So anytime you light a miniature, you have to provide both a hard light and a soft light coming from the same direction, otherwise it looks like you're shooting on the moon."

Mary and John explained that many of the standard model building materials were utilized in creating the Middle Earth miniatures including casting resins, wood, plastic and an array of plant materials. Probably the most unusual plant material mentioned was coconut fiber, which was dyed and



Argonath Teaser Poster without type.



Bilbo (Ian Holm) covets the One Ring.

Commando Cody

Sky Marshall of the Universe



Hey Modelers!
It's time for...

RESOURCE REVIEW

WITH
FRED DERUYO



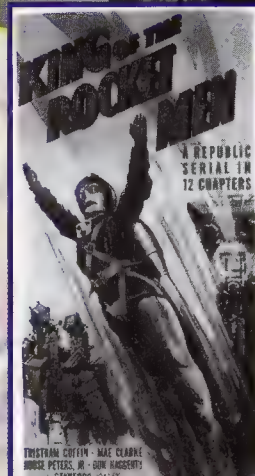
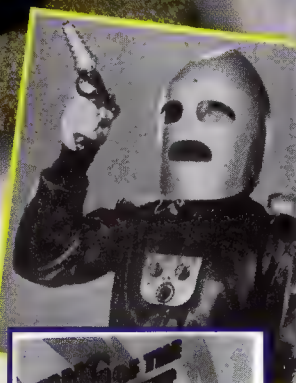
Well, I'm sure you figured out that this article was postponed from last issue and the reason was simply because we overbooked our articles, unfortunately. This necessitated us moving this article and another one to this issue. Things like that happen and life goes on. At least it's here now, but we apologize that you had to wait if you were looking forward to it. It's not our intention to postpone articles, but this occurs sometimes in spite of our best planning.

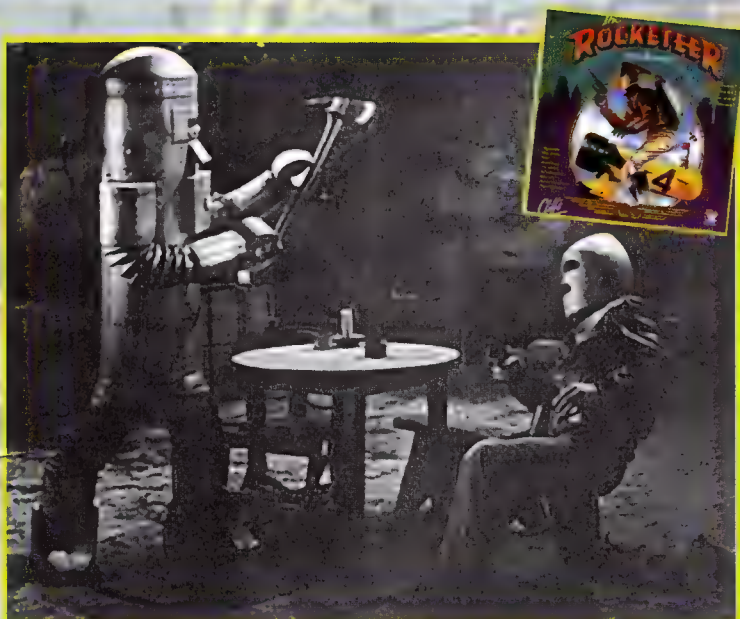
This particular character, Commando Cody, came to life for me with the release of the 1991 Disney movie, "The Rocketeer," which drew its inspiration from Cody. I had seen reruns of Cody when I was a kid, like most kids then, but had largely forgotten about him until Rocketeer showed up in theatres.

The Man

Commando Cody was part of a serial produced by Republic Films in the early 50s. This was, in my opinion, Hollywood's heyday. All things were new and as yet, unexplored. Anything was possible and movie audiences

Right: King of the Rocket Men movie poster, with the adventures of Commando Cody, as played by actor, Judd Holdren (above right and left).





Above: Scene from "Zombies of the Stratosphere" and Dave Stevens' The Rocketeer, inspired by the adventurers of Commando Cody (Inset).



Above: Here the two walls are joined and the seam is eliminated using Plumber's Putty, a quick drying putty.



Above: A rolled up ball of aluminum foil worked well to match the surface of the cave walls and floor.

soaked it up like dry sponges. People just could not get enough. It didn't matter that stunts and "special effects" weren't at their peak. Folks had nothing to compare them with so to movie audiences, everything was real. Unfortunately though, except for raygun-wielding boys, this particular serial didn't do that well and was cancelled after only a few months.

This particular character was a true hero; a hero's hero because he was an ordinary guy who had a jetpack strapped to his back and a specialized gun. The dials on the front of his leather jacket allowed him to "turn" or direct his jetpack the way in which he wanted to go. Ultimately though, like Batman, he needed to outsmart the bad guy with his brain and a bit of brawn in each episode.

Cody's character (played by Judd Holdren) was extremely secretive about his identity and missions. Cody's main focus was to battle the tyrannical Retik the Ruler, which took place every week! Man, the guy just kept coming back!

The Kit

As any good figure modeler will attest, when you can get a model of a character that you really enjoy, life is just one big thrill, isn't it? Actually, it's not just figure modelers per se, it's any type of modeler looking for that particular kit that they've been yearning to be able to add to their collection.

Well, as it turns out, Lunar Models produced a Commando Cody kit, sculpted by Randy Bowen that I had been eyeing for quite some time. I really liked the action-oriented scene that Randy had sculpted into this work. You could feel the tension between man and machine. Who would win?! How would they win?! Tune in next week!

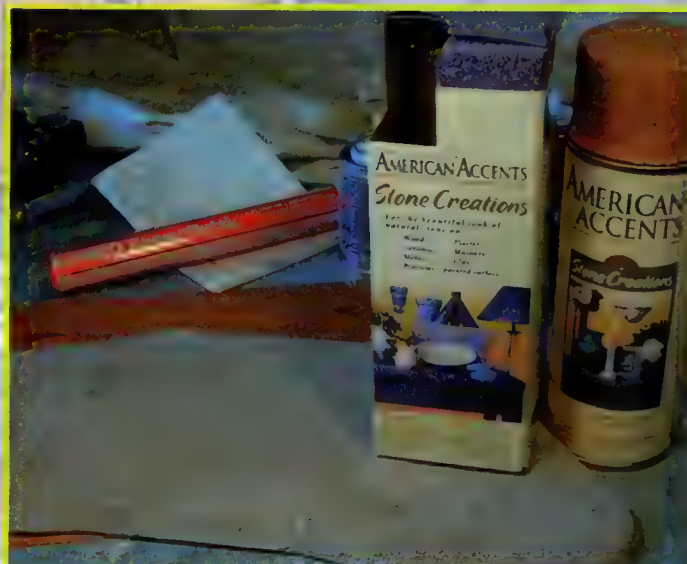
After I did some research, I found that this particular kit was based on a climactic scene from "Zombies of the Stratosphere" (1952, Republic Films). In this serial, Commando Cody's name was changed to Larry Martin (so as not to be confused with another Republic Film serial with the same character). In this teleplay, Larry Martin takes 12 episodes to battle Marex and his fellow aliens from the planet, Mars. Disaster is narrowly avoided when Larry shoots down the aliens' rocket ship and defuses a hydrogen bomb. All this is done just in the nick of time to save earth and its inhabitants! Whew! I'm exhausted...

In the photo shown, an "alien" is heading toward Cody with an axe. As you can see in the photo, Cody is slightly off balance preparing to shoot to kill and, hopefully, save his hide from becoming more than one piece! This scene takes place in a cave and there is furniture scattered throughout and a few boxes piled up in the back. (A little tidbit of additional info is that Leonard Nimoy appeared as one of the Martians in this serial. Incredible isn't it, what some have to do for stardom?!)

The kit mirrors much of this scene with a couple of notable exceptions: 1) in the kit, Cody is standing up, and 2) there is no table and/or chairs accompanying the kit. Another thing I noticed is that it seems to me that the scale is just slightly off between the two figures in the kit. The robot is much taller than Cody in the kit than in the photo. Not a big deal and if I hadn't seen the photo, I doubt that I would have noticed. Overall, the kit is sculpted well. I really like the action that is inherent in the model. The molding could have been a bit better because a few parting lines were more than noticeable and work needed to be done to eradicate them.

The Base

The first thing I did after getting rid of the seams and



Above Left: Trying out Hilber Graf's method of interspersing two colors to achieve a mottled look.
Above Right: Paints used for the floor of the base to provide a textured look and feel.



Above: Except for the nameplate, the base is done.
Below: The detail on the robot was very nice and realistic, except for a few seams needing to be eliminated.



sanding down any rough spots on the base was to prime the parts (after washing). I tried the new Tamiya brand of spray paints. I really like how they work! Once this step was completed and the parts were dry, I tried something that Hilber Graf introduced a number of issues back with his Aliens diorama. You may recall the part where he used two different cans of spray paint to achieve a realistic looking mottled look on the walls of the diorama? Well, I liked it so well that I chose to use it here because of the inconsistent color I wanted to achieve for the cave walls. I was going to try something altogether different for the floor, but I was anxious to try this out on the walls and felt that it worked well and achieved what I was after.

For the floor of the base, I wanted to go for something that would give me a textured look. The base had something sculpted in but I wanted more, so I chose a product from American Accents that provided a nice, sandy look to the base.

That Overgrown Tin Can Guy

This guy was big and solid and came in four parts, not counting his weapon of choice, an axe. The detail was really nice. One problem was encountered with the front lower lip of the body. This was paper-thin and broke off easily while sanding, unfortunately. It was recreated by using a piece of Plastruc sheet styrene, fitting it in, blending the sides and recreating the rivets with a mixture of CA glue and powder.

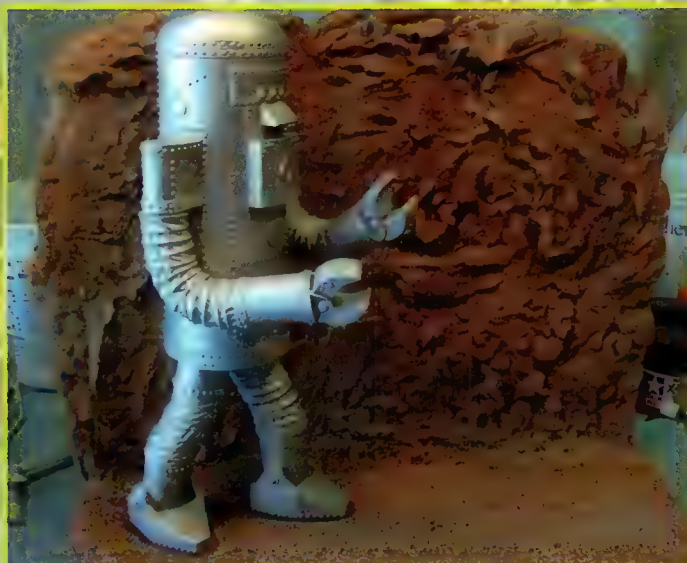
After smooth sanding it, I chose Model Master Aluminum Plate Metalizer spray paint from Testors to achieve the desired finish and look to this metal lug. Once dry, a light polishing was accomplished with tissue. Glued together, he was done.

Commando Cody or Is It Larry?

Larry essentially arrived with a one-piece body. His right hand, which brandished the raygun, was separate as was his left forearm. Also separate were the jet backpack and the set of dials that went on the front of his chest allowing him to choose the direction and velocity that his Jetpack would take him in.

The hands were rough and the feet were smaller than they should have been, but what are you going to do? You fix what you can. I sanded the fingers to round them out a bit more and did some work on the shoes as well. I have no idea if the problem arose from the sculpting or molding, but I'm going to guess that the molds are simply very old and things change over time.

I painted Cody colors that I thought looked good. The leather jacket was painted with Tamiya's Red Brown. His pants were painted buff. His belt and area on his back where the jet-



Above left: Our robot/allen is done except for the placement of his axe. Above right: Commando Cody gets painted up and readied for action!

pack sat were painted black along with his shoes. The helmet was painted bright brass. By this time, I was just looking for some color! Everything was shouting earth tones so I wanted to mix it up a bit. The jetpack was actually painted using Tamiya metal and outlined in silver. Once done with everything, I felt as though something was missing. It just didn't seem finished to me. It looked good and, as I have stated before, I enjoyed the tension that existed between the two figures, but something just wasn't right.

Table for Two Please

In the photo from the serial, I noted that there was a smallish table standing in between the two fighters. That was good, because it gave Cody something that would provide him with a few seconds of protection by keeping the robot back. Sure, he was ready to axe it to pieces, but at least it stood in the way. This did not come with the kit, so I decided to build one. Looking through one of my spare parts box, I found a piece of wood that came with the Mechanic's Garage kit from Scale Equipment, Ltd. I also found some balsa wood planks that would work well as the table legs.

I fashioned the table and the legs and "dirtied" them up by using straight Bon Artiste Antiquing Stain (Black) and then wiping it off. The table legs were glued on using a hot glue gun and, voila! Done.

I figured that this table, set right between these two characters, would offer a bit more tension and mirror the photo more closely as well. What it needed now were a few items to be placed on the table-top. So, I decided to create an amusing bon mot, so to speak. I took a Rocketeer comic book, scanned it, reduced it and printed it out, creating a cover just the right size for my table. I also found an old issue of Popular Mechanics and a few other items and did the same thing. Since there wasn't a great deal of color in the whole kit, these bright items would do just the trick.

Good Conquers Evil

Commando Cody and one of his nemesis...nemesee...nemesi...(what's the plural of "nemesi" anyway?) were close to the end of their fight. Who would win? Who would be victorious? Would good conquer evil? Would evil gain the upper hand on Cody this time? Nope. Not a chance. Good always wins. You know it and so do I.

Cody represents the good things about humanity and provides a way of relief that we count on. When I was a kid, these types of teleplays were great because good was clearly defined and knew the boundaries. I have it again with this model.



Above: Tracing a circle for the top of what will become a table. Small photo below left: A number of scanned and size-reduced magazine covers were utilized as props for top of the table I created.



Below: After using a sheet of "wood" that came with another kit and balsa wood, the finished table with the mags is set to take position between the two figures.



GOING APE!

■ Building a King Kong Diorama ■



Part Two: Kong vs. the Warplane

"I'll have women crying over him before I'm through and the more brutal he is, the more they'll cry at the end." Such was King Kong's producer/director Merian C. Cooper's response to arguments that no one could feel sympathy for an inhuman beast. Cooper was right. During the 1933 movie premiere people did react with tears after Kong's death scene.

In the last issue we covered scratchbuilding the "set" where Kong met his death fighting off a fleet of warplanes while attempting to protect something he loved but could never possess - a beautiful young woman. A masterful scripting of an exciting and poignant moment that has become a motion picture classic. Capturing that scene in miniature has been the challenge.

A Little Simian Trivia:

Over 67 years since its theatrical release, King Kong remains compelling entertainment. Unlike its horror film contemporaries, *Frankenstein* and *Dracula* (both 1931 releases), which now seem dated and creaky by comparison, Kong retains its epic adventure



spirit and stunning visual appeal as a 1930s period piece. That is probably due to King Kong's innovative visual effects. For its era, this film featured great advances in traveling matte composite photography, sound effects recording and the invention of the optical printer. It also featured the famous stop motion animation artist, Willis O'Brien, who would later create amazing effects for the original *Mighty Joe Young*, *The Black Scorpion* and *Mad, Mad, Mad World*.

The New York City sequences contained sweeping cityscapes accomplished by detailed glass paintings and complex miniature sets, layered with miniature projected live action, animated light effects and Kong himself. Glass paintings used in the scene with Kong perched on top of the Empire State Building were 12-feet wide. For impressive point-of-view shots, the camera was made to "dive" toward miniature Kong via animating the equipment down a 24-foot long wooden ramp. This was the most elaborate example at that time of animating the camera itself.

To achieve a greater feeling of depth while filming the miniature set, various scales of special effects model aircraft were used to represent different distances. These airplanes ranged in size from four inches up to fifteen inches in wingspan. The aircraft were suspended on hair thin piano wire stretched tightly between pulleys situated outside camera view. The models moved with the wires rather than along them, the wires being weighted at the forward end and released from the other end in carefully controlled steps.

That's enough trivia for now. Let's do battle with Kong!



Problems To Solve

Building the Empire State Building had a number of construction problems, which were solved after persistent trial and error. The next stage of this project presented a new set of troubles in miniature. The original diorama idea demanded Kong to be perched precariously on top of an odd dome-shaped structure while grabbing a biplane in his hands. Designed in approximately 1/28th scale, this was a large object and susceptible to being top heavy. In addition, numerous potential stress points in both Kong and the airplane had to be reinforced to prevent everything from collapsing under its own weight.

I mentioned in Part One that I considered using McFarlane Toys' Incredible King Kong action figure, but rejected the idea because it was far too heavy. There were vinyl or resin Kong kits also available, but they were again either too large or too heavy. The answer was Polar Light's reissue of the 1960s Aurora King Kong, which was molded in lightweight styrene.

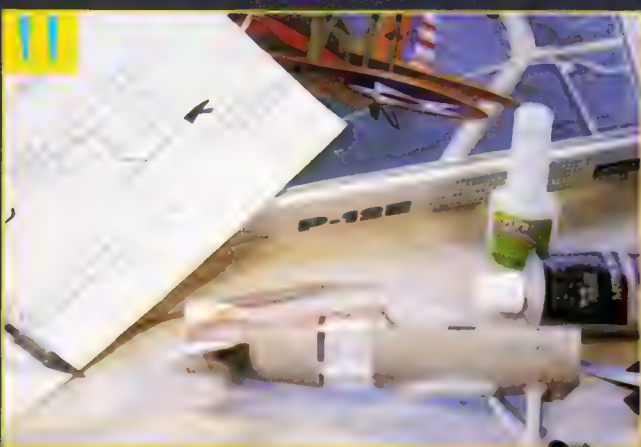
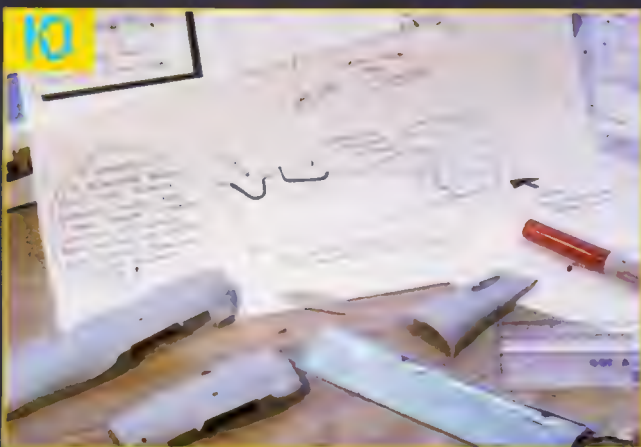
The Navy warplane was a different headache. Kong's attackers in the film were represented by four Curtiss 02C-2 biplanes, a basic two-seat, pilot training aircraft in 1933. The problem was that the actual biplanes were unarmed and the film depicted them as possessing forward firing machine guns with an additional machine-gun mounting for the rear cockpit! So, artistic license became the rule here.

To my knowledge, no model kit of this Curtiss airplane was ever released in any scale. After searching hobby catalogs and stores, I stumbled upon Hasegawa's P-12 and F4B biplane fighters (Army and Navy versions of the same aircraft), nice styrene kits that





Above: Three faces of Kong. The process of painting the King of Apes!



have been available for over two decades. Never mind that these aircraft were only one-seat biplanes and the scale was 1/32nd, they strongly resembled the Curtiss fighters in *King Kong*. So either would have been a worthy candidate for conversion. Now with my actors cast and my research materials at hand (Photo 1), I was ready for the ordeal.

Playing With a Monkey

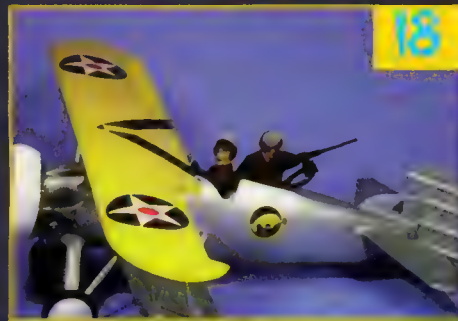
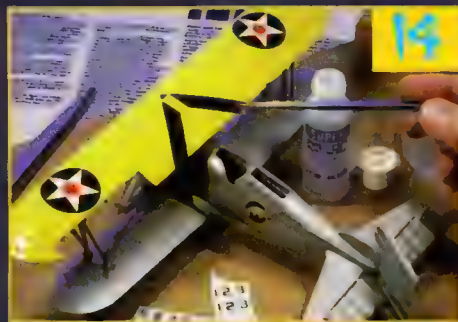
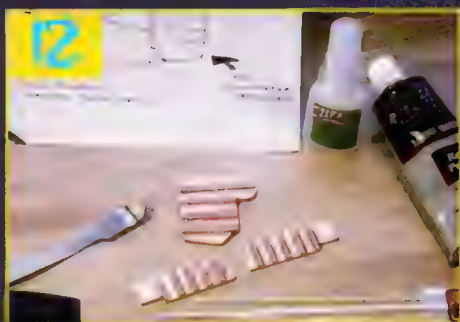
Since *King Kong* is one of my all-time favorite films, I've built many a Kong model kit over the past 35 years. In recent years, Geometric and Dark Horse, to name only two out of many manufacturers offering examples, have produced fine interpretations of this magnificent beast. But back in the '60s, we only had Aurora's styrene ape to satisfy our desires to capture Kong in miniature. Thanks to a cooperative manufacturing arrangement between Polar Lights and Revell-Monogram, the current owner of the original molds, today's younger modelers can experience the thrill us old-timers had when we were kids.

This reissue revealed the molds had stood up fairly well to the test of time. Molded in 33 light gray styrene parts, the detail was still rather crisp, though the posing appeared a bit stiff. The parts fit was typical Aurora, requiring a little filling and sanding here and there. However, closer inspection of the instruction sheet and the jungle diorama base revealed there were more positioning holes in the base than parts to fit there. I had discussions with other modelers and Polar Lights about this. An injection mold for some of the jungle tree parts no longer existed, so this reissue was technically an incomplete kit. I suggest adding a pair of Verlinden Models 1/35th scale palm trees to the base to correct this problem. Priced under \$20, Polar Lights' *King Kong* remains a good value.

During construction of the Empire State Building diorama base, I temporarily assembled Kong's body and limbs together with tape and rubber bands. This aided in deciding how Kong would be positioned and where mounting holes needed to be located on the base. My plan of Kong grabbing an airplane in one hand while perched on the building made those subassemblies top heavy. Stress points in Kong's legs and arms would possibly crack under the weight. When I repositioned his legs, a brass rod was inserted and reinforced with an epoxy putty plug (Photo 2). Textured epoxy putty covered seams with new fur and filled gaps. I frequently test-fitted Kong on the building to check my posing (Photo 3).

Kong's right arm and shoulders received the same treatment (Photo 4). The remaining ape parts were assembled and additional epoxy fur applied to joints and seams (Photo 5). More sculpted putty broadened Kong's head and eyebrows, giving him a ferocious appearance. In the theater escape sequence, Kong managed to free himself from all but one of these restraining manacles - the right wrist. This was easy to shape out of a sheet of epoxy putty. Later I dressed it up with a short length of broken chain. Testor's Red Putty smoothed out imperfections, completing construction, and Kong was ready for painting.

In my humble opinion, our very own Bill Craft has accomplished some of the best-rendered great ape figures. The Craftbeast is a master with an airbrush and he has finished a number for the pages of *Modeler's Resource*. My approach to painting Kong models was not as



sophisticated as Bill's. In fact, my technique was simplistic and brutal by comparison.

Setting my airbrush aside, I began with a spray can base coat of Testor's Model Master Flat Black when painting styrene apes, or Coat d'Arms Acrylic Black Primer for vinyl figures (Photo 6). I drybrushed highlights in Raw Umber, Red Oxide and finally a series of light grays (Photo 7). This process was applied quickly with a 1/2-inch wide flat brush. I took a slower pace when painting Kong's face, carefully picking out details in acrylics (Photo 8). Happy with the results, I turned my efforts to the next step.

Inventions Became Necessary

I mentioned earlier some of the discrepancies between the full size aircraft depicted and the effects miniatures. Twenty-eight shots of genuine airplanes were intercut with shots filmed in miniature and in process. Close-ups were accomplished using a full size mock-up on a studio sound stage. Watch the film and compare shots of the airplanes in flight and close-ups of the flight crew - they don't match! The real airplane was an unarmed, two-seat pilot trainer, but the effects models were fitted with miniature machine-guns. Also, the full size mock-up has a completely different-shaped rear gunner tub than the models. Action and editing were very rapid during Kong's death scene, so unless you still frame and analyze your videotape, it's hard to detect. Right or wrong, I felt this justified creative license to invent whatever warplane design looked good for this part of the project.

Hasegawa's P-12 kit resembled the film aircraft except for the cockpit and tail sections. After studying still photos of the film, I drafted up conversion plans (Photo 9). The fuselage needed to be extended by 1-inch, this area being where the gunner position was located. Following my plans, I sawed off the airplane tail (Photo 10). I fashioned structural framework out of .040" square rod with a .030" sheet rectangle cockpit floor (Photo 11). The kit's vertical and horizontal stabilizers were a completely different shape than the movie aircraft. New parts were fabricated of .080" styrene sheet, detailed with .040" square rod ribbing, the rough edges smoothed out with that indispensable Red Putty (Photo 12).

The fuselage skin was cut from .010" plastic sheet, wrapped and superglued over the framework. Numerous seams and small gaps resulted and were corrected with succeeding layers of Testor's Red Putty, carefully shaped to match the contours of the fuselage (Photo 13). This was a tedious task requiring plenty of curing time between layers to prevent shrinkage and cracking. Except for the belly tank and bomb racks, further assembly of the

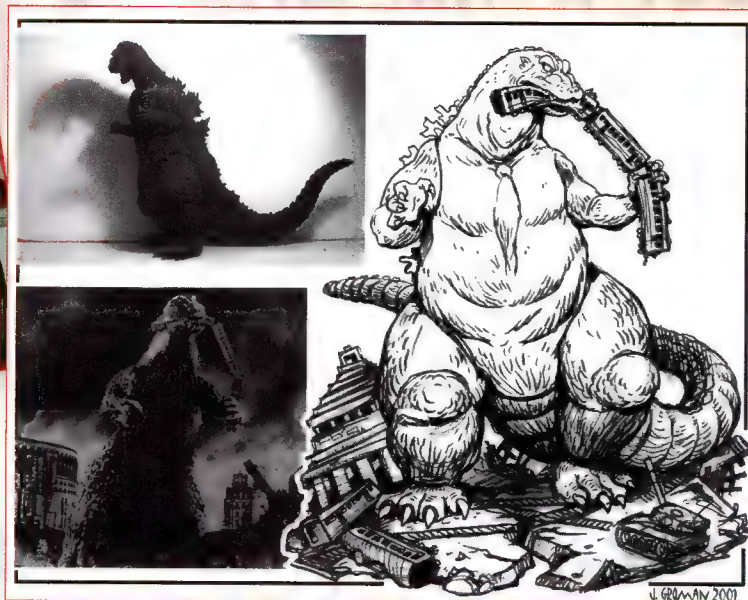
aircraft more or less followed the kit instructions. My spare parts box provided a machine gun and mount for the gunner's position.

Subassemblies needed to be painted during general assembly; otherwise some areas would be impossible to finish properly. Although the movie warplanes were rather plain with minimal markings, aircraft schemes of the 1930s "Golden Era of Aviation" were extremely colorful by comparison. I chose a simple Navy paint scheme of Testors' German Metallic Silver with a Bright Yellow top wing. The kit decal sheet supplied national insignia and other markings. I used Micro Set, a decal setting solution, to apply decals (Photo 14). Setting solutions soften the decal so it conforms better to the painted model surface. These products are easy to use, but be aware that not all solution brands are compatible with all kit-supplied decals. Some may cause the colors to run, so it is advisable to first test the solution on a small, unimportant decal before you risk the whole sheet. Once assembled, painted and decaled, I set aside the completed warplane for a couple of days to rest before double-checking for correctable errors (Photo 15).

More King movie trivia: Close-ups of the pilots and gunners were shot in the studio mock-up with composite backgrounds. The commander and his chief observer in those scenes were none other than directors Merian Cooper and Ernest Schoedsack, performing under Schoedsack's direction. This unusual bit of casting was the result of Cooper's remark that "We should kill Kong ourselves."

This wasn't a ghost plane and I needed pilot and gunner figures. A trip to my local hobby shop proved futile, so I turned to my parts box again. After an hour of rummaging through hundreds of leftovers, I found enough parts to more or less piece together two figures (Photo 16). They didn't resemble the movie aircrew that much, but their clothing did have a 1930's military look and that was close enough. Epoxy putty filled gaps and seams and created pilot goggles. Since their lower limbs were completely hidden once inserted in the airplane, I omitted them and saved myself work (Photo 17). At first I felt the figures were a bit crude, but once painted in acrylics and fitted into the cockpit I was satisfied (Photo 18).

The moment finally arrived to permanently attach the airplane into Kong's paw, then glue him to the mounting hole on the Empire State. I rotated the entire diorama, surveying it from various angles (Photos 19 & 20), scrutinizing my creation for defects. There are always things with every completed project you want to improve upon, but I had to admit I could also hear Kong roar in defiance!



CREATING A SCULPTURE OF



by James Groman

Godzilla, King of the Monsters®. I can't say that the name has the same impact today as it did at the time of the release of the original 1954 film. It has more!

Coming from a 15-year background in the toy business, I have seen many products bearing the name and title of Toho Film's greatest creation. While working on projects based on the 1998 Sony-Tristar film, I had read in publicity material that the name Godzilla has a 95 to 98 percent global recognition rate in the civilized world. I wonder if old Raymond Burr himself had ever considered the possibility that his rubber suited costar would some day surpass him in worldwide notoriety.

Aurora Plastics knew it, almost forty years ago. So did Imperial Toys, Marvel Comics, Trendmasters, Bandai, Hanna-Barbera and even Blue Oyster Cult. But, in 1998 the makers of the Sony Tristar Godzilla film learned it wasn't so much the name that made the King of the Monsters an international success. It was the character himself, an unstoppable force of nature with the power of the Atom and the appearance of a creature from the dawn of time.

Early in January of 2001, I was approached by Jerry Gustafson, of Polar Lights model division of Playing Mantis, about sculpting a model kit based on Godzilla. When I found out that the version of the monster they wanted to do was the classic 1954 creature, I immediately asked how much I would have to pay them to do it. Careful, Jim. Gotta feed the wife and kids. Mortgage due. Psychiatric bills.

As we began to discuss the pose and size of the kit, I was



flabbergasted to learn that it was planned as a 16-inch tall exclusive with Toys-R-Us! Over the next few weeks Mr. Gustafson must have thought I had resin in my ears as I continually checked and re-checked the size with him. Sixteen inches? It was too good to be true!

Jerry said that their goal was to create the ultimate Godzilla kit. To make a classic in the style of the Aurora monster models of the sixties, only this time on a grander scale.

Jerry even had a scene in mind he wanted to portray. It was based on a famous retouched publicity still used to promote the film in the fifties. It showed Godzilla standing among burning skyscrapers holding a string of passenger trains in his claws, as he crushes another car in his mouth. This is one of the first images of Godzilla that I can remember seeing as a kid and it left an impression that has lasted until this day. Now it was my chance to pass that image onto a new generation of rugrats shopping for Pokemon at the local Toys-R-Us.

Upon learning of my new project, my good friend, Terry Webb, sent me an invaluable and rare book on the making of the original Godzilla, King of the Monsters. This incredible tome is packed with many behind-the-scenes photos and stills shot during the production. This book guided me through a series of design sketches over the next few days, as a copy of the film ran on a VCR in the corner of my studio. Upon watching the film again my suspicions were confirmed. Dark, dramatic, and deadly serious, the first film is still the best Godzilla movie ever made.

As soon as the kit was designed on paper, I moved on into the world of three-dimensions. I carefully worked out a 16-inch silhouette drawing of the main Godzilla figure, to guide me in setting the proportions. Using a variety of copper tubing and fine gauge wire, I fashioned the sturdy under-





structure to which I would later attach my Super Sculpey™. Yikes, I better call Jerry one more time...did he say 16 inches?!

To build up the rotund shape of the monster, I began by covering my copper armature with a thick layer of regular white Sculpey, baking each layer as I went. When I reached the basic size and girth of Godzilla's mass, I began to add a thinner skin of Super Sculpey. It is in this layer that I began to carve, knead and shape the monster king's bulky anatomy.

Close inspection of the behind-the-scene photos in the Godzilla book revealed the actual costume's crude detailing. The effectiveness of the black and white film is a testament to the skillful direction of Monster Master, Inoshiro Honda. Since our Godzilla kit had to succumb to closer scrutiny by a more jaded audience, we chose to eliminate many of the more unrefined aspects of the original costume. We wanted a kind of Ryosaku Taksugi (the man who built the first "Big G" suit), by way of Stan Winston.

Once most of the form had been "blocked in" with Super Sculpey, I impatiently moved onto the head and face. I will tell you at this point that I tore the head apart and started it over at least four times before I was happy with it. As simple a design as Godzilla looks to be, it is important that all the facial forms come together just right, or it is not the classic "G."

For the corduroy-like skin texture that covers the prehistoric creature's hide, I fashioned a special texture tool from baked Sculpey and steel wire. Pressing it into the clay in a flowing pattern, I was careful in navigating around and over wrinkles and bulges convincingly. As I brought the rippling detail around the edges of arms, legs and rounded body parts, I had to take special care to avoid creating any severe undercuts in the sculpt. I have often read kit reviews or overheard fans and collectors mention that they "can't see any differences in the casting of vinyl, resin or styrene kits." Believe me, there are differences!

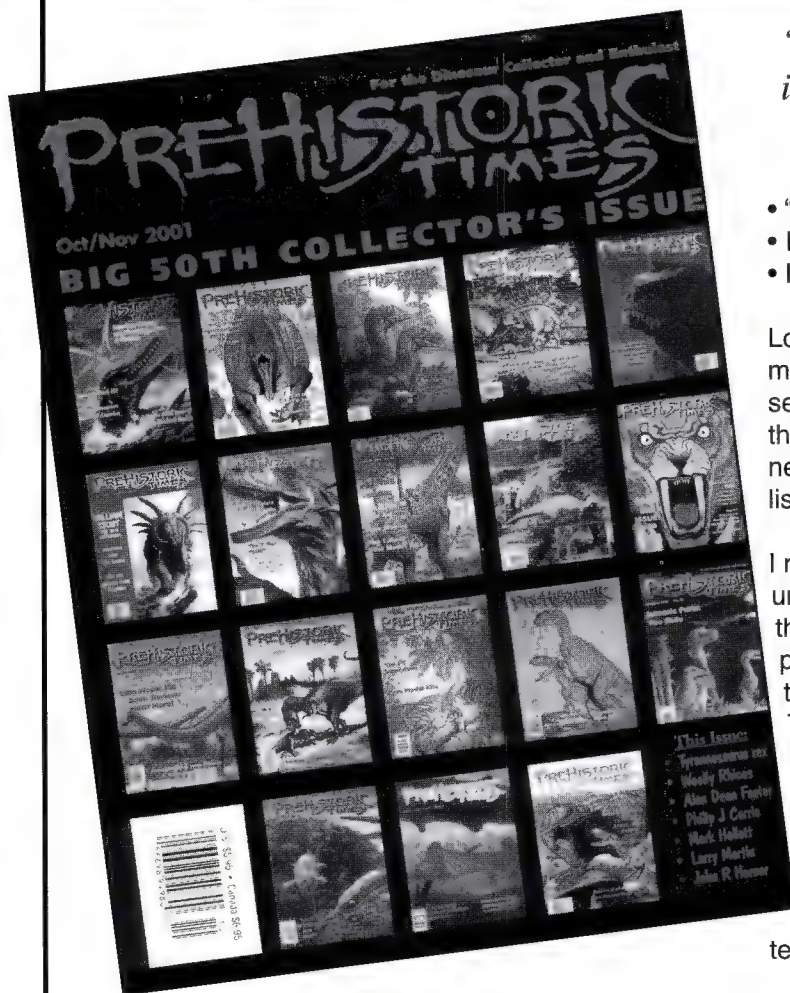
Styrene is very unforgiving and must be pulled from a rigid, metal mold. Any deep cuts or angles in the wrong places of a sculpture, and the styrene model part will not release from the mold. A vinyl kit, in turn, is pulled from a metal mold usually while it is still soft, allowing for the vinyl to "give." Resin is pulled from a rubber mold, which allows for the mold itself to give way to the less flexible resin piece. Polar Lights is continually trying to push the injection-molding process to a higher level, overcoming its limitations. I consider their work on the recent "Sleepy Hollow" kit that I sculpted, a breakthrough piece in their attempt at reproducing a sculpture as well as the process will allow.

Anyway, soapboxes aside, with the finishing of Godzilla's hands, feet and massive tail, the figure was nearly complete. After baking him thoroughly, I applied a thin layer of Super Sculpey down the middle of his back, starting at his neck and ending at the beginning of his tail. This soft trench of clay was ready to receive the thirty-odd back fins that I had sculpted earlier. These familiar cactus-shaped, back plates are arguably Godzilla's most prominent and recognizable feature. I carefully began to press each one into the soft Sculpey running down the monster's spine, forming a male/female-style plug for each fin to fit into. I finished this step by detailing, then heating the soft clay. Now, Godzilla himself was nearly done, I only needed to cut him apart so that I could detail those embarrassing, hard-to-reach spots: areas under his armpits, inner thighs and (ulp) his lizard crotch. Okay, 'Zilla, turn your head and cough!

At this point, I needed to see the entire composition of the kit with the base finished, so I decided to set the King of the Monsters aside and work on his surroundings before dissecting him.

Being more skilled at organic shapes than vehicles and architecture, I spent some time planning my attack. Armed with calipers, a ruler and strips of styrene plastic, I set to work on my table-

AT THE NEWSSTAND



Prehistoric Times Turns 50!

Well, not literally, but this latest issue is their 50th issue and it's a gem!

I've said this before, but it bears repeating: I'm no dino expert and it's not even my main interest in life, but when I read through PT, I can be assured that I will learn some really great things about prehistoric life.

This particular issue of PT boasts a wealth of informative articles for you. Included among them is:

- The PT Interview: Mark Hallett
- How to Draw Dinosaurs
- Dragons & Unicorns - Woolly Rhinos
- New Dinosaurs from Asia
- Tyrannosaurus rex
- Collector's Corner
- Interview with Larry Martin
- Die Welt in Sterne
- Two-part Interview with Jack Horner

"I'm very proud to have produced 50 issues of the magazine..."

— Mike Fredericks, Editor of PT

- "Bird of Prey"
- Interview with Philip J. Currie
- How to Sculpt Dinos

Looking through this latest issue of Prehistoric Times makes me think of our own growth as a magazine. It seems like only yesterday that we began a publication that was essentially a 12-page, xeroxed black and white newsletter. It won't be too long before we will be publishing our own 50th edition.

I remember when we first began, we had read about and understood that if a new publication didn't make it within the first five years, it wouldn't make it. Beyond that, most publications don't even become profitable until well after the two-year mark. Many do not make it to year five. Thus is the story of the average magazine.

Think about how many magazines have died over the past few years and I'm not just talking about the modeling industry either. Think about how many model companies (large *and* small) no longer exist. The fact that PT is still here, going strong with number 50 is a testimony to how well they have served the industry.

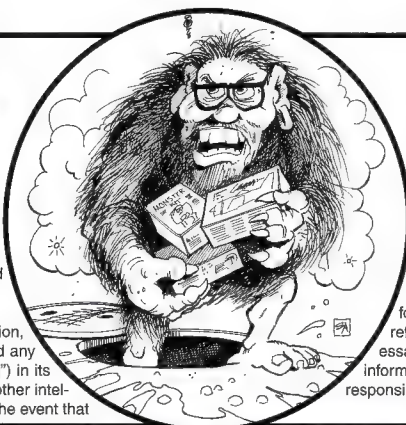
I asked Mike Fredericks, the publisher and all around backyard dino expert, what it's like to publish 50 issues of PT and if he could change anything, what would it be. He said, "How do I feel? Tired, but it's a good kind of tired. Of course, I'm very proud to have produced 50 issues of the magazine and I thank all those who helped me make it possible.

"Would I have changed anything? That the magazine would have made me a millionaire by now. That hasn't happened, so I guess I'll just have to be grateful for all the great people I've made the acquaintance of along the way and I'll strive to make Prehistoric Times even better the next 50 issues." — Mike Fredericks

Would you like to find out more about this magazine that caters to folks who are seriously into the prehistoric? If so, contact them at: **Prehistoric Times, 145 Bayline Cir, Folsom CA 95630-8077 • Tel: 916.985.7986 (8 - 5 PST) • Fax: 916.985.2481 • E-mail: pretimes@aol.com** or on the 'Net at: **www.prehistorictimes.com**

Strange New THINGS

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Coming at You!

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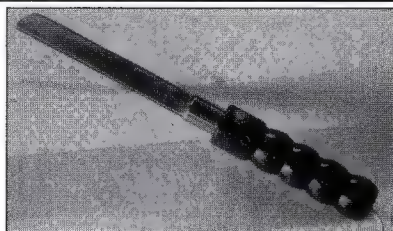
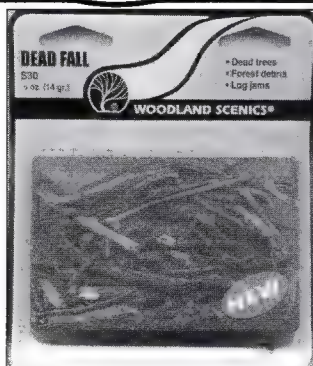
Woodland Scenics..

is offering a number of new products to help you in your diorama efforts.

To help create that special look of fall, **Dead Fall** is available, which consists of tiny, broken branches. Depending upon the scale you're working in, these could double for logs or smaller branches.

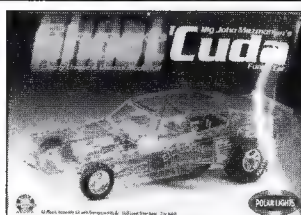
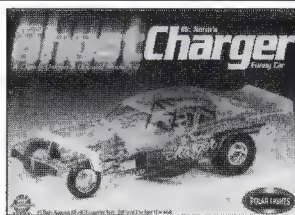
Next up is the **Flowering Foliage Purple** and **Yellow** that will add just a bit of color to your diorama.

As always, Woodland Scenic products are available locally through your favorite hobby retailer, but if you are unable to track these products down in your home town, you've got a couple of choices. You can either contact them via the phone at: **573.346.5555** or the 'Net: **www.woodlandscenics.com** and they will help you find a place near you that sells their product or direct you to a mail order firm that will be able to fill your order.



Tais Ind...

introduces it's new hot knife! The knife has a stainless steel blade and wood handle and is capable of reaching 900 degrees F. There is no transformer! Just plug into the wall. This knife will cut wax, candles, styro, nylon, latex, pe, pp, ps, flex pvc, etc. The blade is 6 inches long and the power button is on the handle. Price is \$49.95 FOB for the Los Angeles area. For additional shipping info, contact them at: **Tais Ind., Inc. 2125 Wright Ave., Ste. C-11, LaVerne, Ca. 91750 Tel: 909-593-2592 • Fax: 909-593-9888**



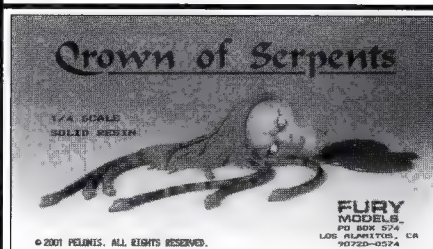
Polar Lights..

Now you see it, now you don't! Introducing the all-new Ghost Cuda and Ghost Charger from Polar Lights®. Transparent bodies allow you to see straight through to the inner-workings of two popular auto bodies.

These are automotive kits with transparent bodies. Each skill level 3 kit is a 1:25 scale reproduction of vintage funny cars, and will have a suggested retail price of \$17.99 each. The Slixx decals accompany the kit so you can bring it to life! Look for these kits to hit stores in September of 2001 at your favorite hobby shop nationwide.

Fury Models..

introduces **Crown of Serpents** in 1:4 scale. It's sculpted by George Pelonis in one piece/solid resin with color box art for \$20.00 each. Free shipping/handling to U.S. customers (Int'l orders add \$5.00 s/h per piece - CA residents please add sales tax) to: **Fury Models, PO Box 574 Los Alamitos CA 90720-0574**. Prepainted busts can be purchased for \$50.00 each.



Earthbound Studios..

presents its third release in their bust series! Teenage Frankenstein, sculpted by William Paquet, is 17" tall, includes three parts and the cost is \$130.00 plus \$10.00 shipping.

For more information on this or their other busts, contact them at: **Earthbound Studios, PO Box 1833, Battle Ground, WA 98604 • Tel: 360.263.8535 (8am to 6pm PST, Monday through Friday)**. Dealer inquiries are welcome. Other busts will be forthcoming!

Budgie Kits...

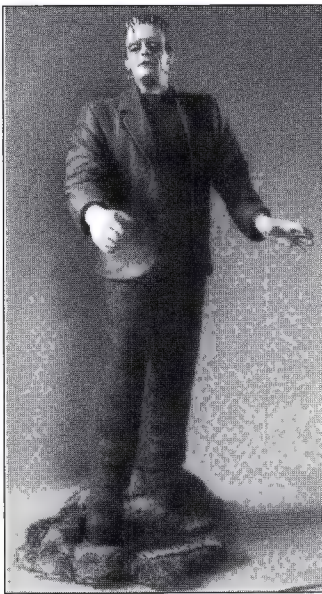
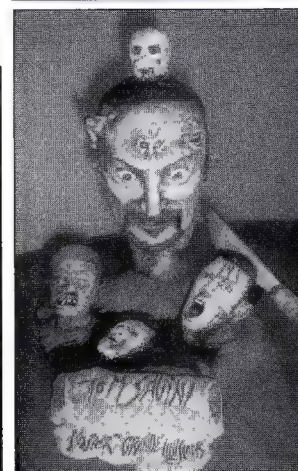
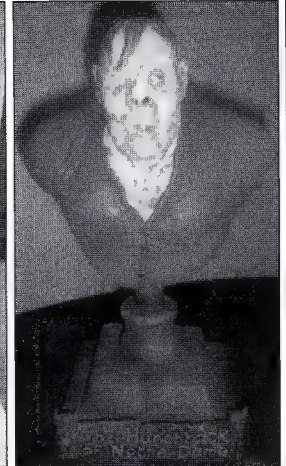
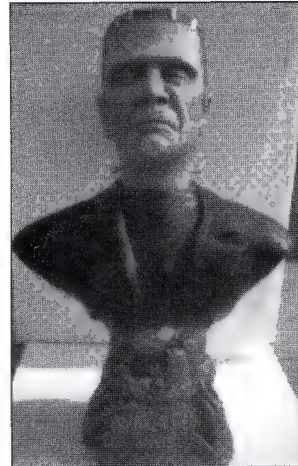
has a number of new releases for you. First up is Bela Lugosi as the Frankenstein Monster bust. This piece stands 11 inches tall, was sculpted by Joe Hope and comes cast in one piece.

Charles Laughton as Quasimodo bust. Standing around 12 inches tall and sculpted by Joe Hope, this kit is cast in four pieces.

Tom Savini Tribute kit is next in line and is cast in twelve pieces. Kit is based on Savini's logo and made in cooperation with and authorized by Tom Savini himself. Piece stands roughly 11 inches high.

The Seductive Slayer is a 1:6 scale kit. Cast in seven parts including base, this kit stands a little over 11 inches tall and was sculpted by Gerald Hunt.

All the kits come complete with color box art and in the case of The Hunchback, Savini Tribute and Lugosi monster kits, a fact-sheet relating to the kit is supplied. All kits are available now and you can contact them at: **Martin Cage, Budgie Kits, 176 Bretch Hill, Banbury, Oxon OX16 0LY England Tel: 44 (0)1295 276461 • Fax: 44 (0)870 522125 • E-mail: martin@budgiecage.demon.co.uk • http:budgiecage.tripod.com/kits/**



Of Gods and Monsters...

introduces the first kit of a four-part series based on the classic Universal Frankenstein series.

Glenn Strange from "Abbott & Costello Meet Frankenstein" is a 16", five-piece solid resin kit sculpted by Brian Hamilton and cast by Mark Brokaw of Earthbound Studios.

Available now, it sells for \$99 plus \$7 postage. The next kit in the series, a two-figure piece based on Lugosi and Chaney from "Frankenstein Meets the Wolfman" should be available later this year.

You can contact them at: **Of Gods and Monsters, c/o Brian Hamilton, 7 Forest St, Gloucester MA 01930 Tel: 978.283.6583**

Studio Hammell...

is going to be releasing two new ones for you.

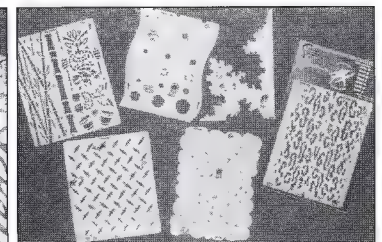
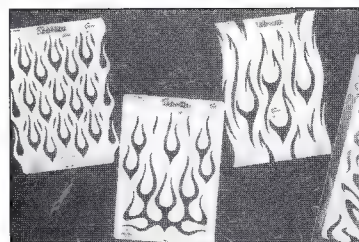
Five million years ago, ancient Martians attempted to colonize earth by proxy, by abducting and genetically altering Earth's population of hominoid apes. They succeeded and we are their heirs as seen in the film "Five Million Years to Earth." Tim Hammell of Studio Hammell has just completed the sculpt on a 3-D representation of the Pit Martian to be released as a resin model kit. In 1:6 scale, with nine pieces including a base of excavated apeman skulls, it's currently being molded while the box art and instructions are being drawn up. Release date and price are TBA, but Tim hopes to keep it under the \$100 mark.

For the modeler's workshop that has everything except a decorative light-switch plate comes - a decorative lightswitch plate! A gargoyle face with optional "nose" piece (to cover the actual lightswitch toggle), this whimsical piece can be painted or faux finished to match any decor (or used in a diorama). The first in a series, it's approximately 4" x 6" x 1/2" in solid resin. Available for US \$25.00 including shipping in North America. Special offer to readers of Modeler's Resource: two for \$35.00 including shipping to North America. Money orders only, payable to: Tim Hammell. To put yourself on the Studio Hammell Collector's List, e-mail Tim at: **hammellt@cadvision.com** or write to: **Studio Hammell, 3304 Centre St, North, Calgary Alberta, Canada T2E 2X6**

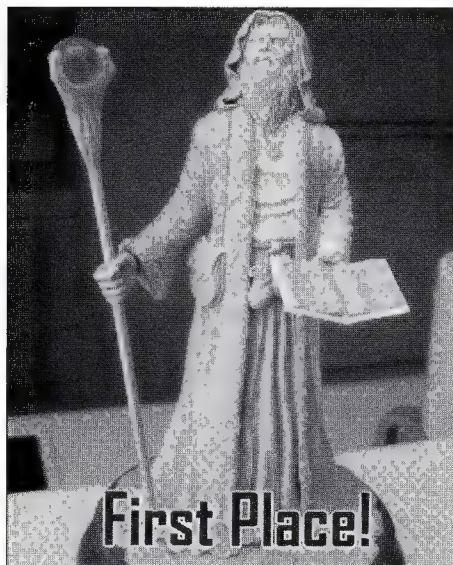


Artool Products Company...

has done it again with ten, count 'em, 10! new and wildly cool **Flame-O-Rama** and **Kustom FX Freehand Airbrush Templates**, designed by Craig Fraser. Easy to use with both water-based and solvent-based paints, they're solvent proof! Contact: **Artool Products Company, PO Box 14397, Portland OR 97293 USA Tel: 503.253.7308 • Fax: 503.253.0721 • E-mail: info@medea-artool.com**



"And the Winnahs Are...!"



Jimmy Verbeeck from Belgium
Merlin (1/8 scale)
Wins: 20 lbs of Magic Sculp



Bob Hastings from Oklahoma
Saxon Warrior
Battle of Hastings 1066
(approx 1/9th scale)
Wins: 10 lbs of Magic Sculp



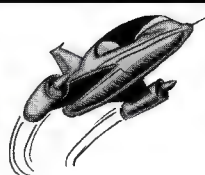
Tim Brunn from Wisconsin
The Insection of Am-phibia
Wins: 5 lbs of Magic Sculp

From the Folks who bring you...

Magic
*Sculp*TM
www.magicsculp.com

And the NEXT contest starts **NOW!** You've got until **September 1, 2002** to get your pictures into us. There will be **two categories**: sculptures done with mostly or all Magic Sculp and those done with a minimal amount of Magic SculpTM along with another product. Start working now! More details to follow, so stay tuned! More details coming up in future issues!

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GOREFEST 2002

Sunday, February 10, 2002 at the Four Points Sheraton Hotel, 700 West Huntington Dr., Monrovia, CA. Presented by Creed Family Entertainment.

Sci-Fi/Fantasy Model Contest, Vendor Faire, Scream Queen Contest. For more information, contact: George Louis Creed, Pasadena Modeler's Society, 315 W. Hillcrest Blvd., Monrovia, CA 91016 or E-mail to: PasadenaModeler@cs.com



top jigsaw. After building a couple of windowed skyscraper structures, I took out my frustrations by beating the hell out of them. Cutting, gouging and grinding with a Dremel™, I obtained the desired damage effects caused by Godzilla's attack. Since my skills in the construction zone are limited, I called upon James Elliott, a talented artist who shares my studio, to construct the ruined remains of the Tokyo capitol building. When he became timid about applying the necessary surface damage to his masterwork, I took over, hacking and grinding with my dremel. Sorry, Jim. Doctor's orders!

Mr. Elliott's new assignment was creating the miniscule wheels that would accent the Japanese passenger train cars I was just finishing up. My solution for these was to build a styrene pattern of the side of one train car, complete with windows, doors and trim. Then this pattern was pressed into a rectangular piece of soft Super Sculpey, creating an imprint of the windows, etc. I did this for all three cars, both sides. While they were still soft, I once again added the appropriate 'Zilla damage. The car in his hand and mouth were pinched in the centers to represent where Godzilla's powerful grip had crushed them (and their unfortunate occupants! Ha!).

Jerry Gustafson and Polar Lights' model box artist, Chris White, began e-mailing me reference on the Patton tank I would be constructing for the kit's base. Chris and I had been in touch for some time now about the project, and his enthusiasm insured me his contribution would be his usual top-notch job. Over the course of my work, I made Chris privy to the progress of the sculpture, my reward being the chance to view his concept sketches for the proposed box art. It looked to be another outstanding piece of work from the talented brush of Mr. White.

The final part of this monumental job fell on the weekend, mostly by my choice. No phone calls, no visitors, no interruptions. Armed with my vicious scroll and hacksaws, I began to draw and quarter the results of my six-week endeavor.

Once the body was suitably sectioned, more Super Sculpey was added to the parts of Godzilla's anatomy that I could not reach while he was in one piece. These were detailed accordingly. Now this "King of the Model Kits" was truly finished.

A very important last step for a job such as this is the organization and packaging of the finished sculpture for shipping. Time did not allow for the production of rubber molds and resin castings of this particular piece, so the sculpt itself was going to have to make the Federal Express® trip to Jerry Gustafson, then on to our friends in Asia.

I spent at least four hours labeling each section, body part and appendage with a black magic marker. I numbered each back fin, and put a corresponding number in the socket on Godzilla's back where the fin was to go. This complete, I moved to my computer and accessed the fifty or so digital photographs I had taken over the course of the project. A number of the best shots I included in the package, so that the tooling people in Asia would be able to see exactly how the whole kit was to be assembled. Another hour and thirty feet of bubble wrap later, the big guy was bundled, boxed and shipped. Just think of little Elliott with tears in his eyes watching E.T. fly off into space, and you get an idea of what it must have looked like as I watched that package go. How do you write, "handle with care or die" in Chinese?

I am sure upon reading this article that many fans of Toho's unchallenged "King of the Monsters" will be anticipating the release of the first major American Godzilla model in forty years. But none of them more than me.

Uh, oh. What's that on my studio floor?! A small, detailed back fin with the number twenty-two scrawled on it in black marker? Yikes! I wonder if I can still catch that truck!!! Sayonara!



THE SIGHTS & SOUNDS OF MODELING!

with Bill Craft

Welcome back to the wonderful world of films on DVD and the music from those films on CD that have influenced the model kit world.

STAR TREK: THE MOTION PICTURE

Paramount Home Video

There are two thoughts on this release. First, its about time Paramount got around to doing it. Second, its basically the same ho-hum film.

This version is Director Robert Wise's vision of the film. There are many enhanced scenes that in some instances are stunning. Some scenes are shortened while others are extended. This version was originally planned as a theatrical re-release. When the enhanced digital screen blow-up showed flaws, the release was abandoned.

This is a two-disk set with so much added material, it will make any serious Trek fan happy. The film itself looks marvelous and the sound quality enhancement is pretty good.

Please don't send me hate letters on this. I really like the Trek-verse as a whole. In fact, the opening credits and the first images of the Klingons in this film are one of my all-time favorite bits of film. It just goes nowhere from there.



THE MUMMY

Warner Home Video

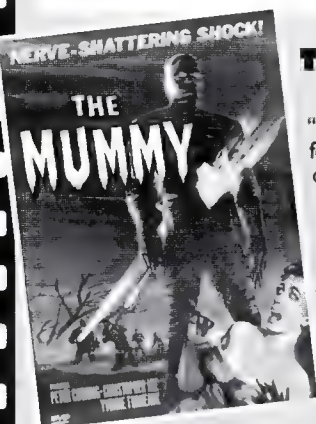
Oh those greedy folks at Warner. Fans of the big-three Hammer Films, "Horror Of Dracula," "Curse of Frankenstein" and "The Mummy" have been waiting for the DVD releases of these films for a long time. Warner owns the domestic rights and has until now refused to release them citing non-profitability. Ah, but when rival studio Universal brought out the sequel to its recent remake of the mega hit "The Mummy," "The Mummy Returns," Warner just had to try and cash in. Thus, we have Hammer's "The Mummy."

Christopher Lee stars as the title beastie and his opponent is Peter Cushing. Made in 1959, "The Mummy" was directed by genre veteran Terence Fisher. The film remains one of the hallmarks from the studio that dripped blood, Hammer.

The widescreen print looks good and the colors are rich. The only extra Warner has decided to bestow on us is a trailer. The film is presented in the same cheap Warner cardboard crap case.

Let us all pray that the maverick DVD company, Anchor Bay, somehow can get the rights and release this film on DVD with as much TLC as it has given the bulk of its Hammer Film releases.

For now, let us be a bit thankful for this release on DVD.



THE ANGRY RED PLANET

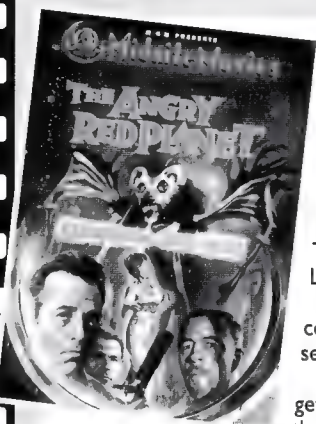
MGM Home Entertainment

Continuing in their "Midnite Movie" line of DVD releases, "The Angry Red Planet" comes as a refreshing surprise.

One of the most outrageous creatures ever seen on film is in this 1960 science fiction feature. The incredible giant Bat-Rat-Spider-Crab! The old Lunar Models' kit on this creature was the best.

The print is a bit scratchy in parts but the colors are wonderful. Especially the exterior Mars sequences which were filmed with a red filter.

The films in this line are for us fans on a budget and are housed in the standard hard case. Keep them coming MGM!



THE TERMINATOR

MGM Home Entertainment

Well here we go again! For those of you who may have missed the previous DVD releases of this film, "He's back!" Boasting a new transfer with all new interviews and deleted scenes, this edition is pretty worthwhile.

I absolutely refuse to buy any more versions of this film.

Unless, of course, someone comes up with some unseen Linda Hamilton cheesecake scenes.



PLANET OF THE APES: THE COMPLETE TV SERIES

Fox Home Entertainment

This "Apes" thing has got to stop! I really hated this series when it first aired, but I was compelled to buy this DVD box set nonetheless.

The series went into production immediately after the final entry into the original film series, "Battle For The Planet Of The Apes." The series wasn't exactly the hit the studio executives would have had. It was cancelled halfway into the season. The "Apes" saga was officially over.

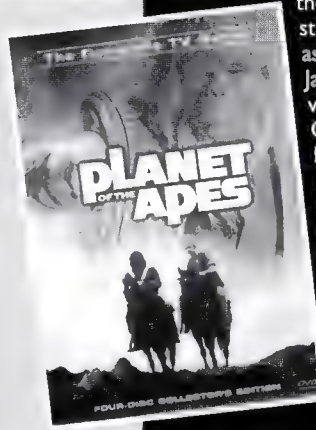
Once again that veteran ape actor,

the late Roddy McDowell, stepped into the simian role as Galen. Ron Harper and James Naughton were our visiting human astronauts.

Of special note, the late Mark Lenard, of Star Trek fame, was the main antagonist portraying the militant gorilla, General Urko.

All 14 episodes are presented here uncut in full frame on four disks.

This DVD set is for completists only.



PLANET OF THE APES

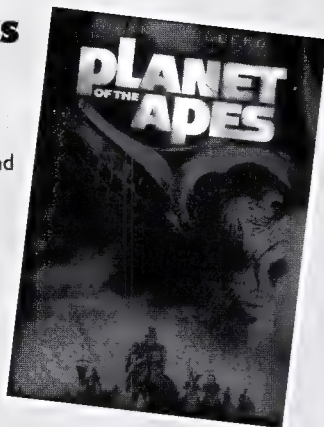
Fox Home Video

This film is destined to be forgotten as time goes by. I really tried to view this new "Apes" film with an open mind. Alas, I failed and so did many of you. Gimme back the original classic film any day.

The main highlight is the acting of the chimp leader played by Tim Roth. Outstanding! Our star, Mark Wahlberg, could have been played by anybody.

On the plus side is the picture quality and sound.

The second disk has over 13 hours of extra features that even I could not get through. You will have to be a rabid fan of this film to appreciate all it has to offer. God help us! A sequel is in the works.



THE DIRTY HARRY SERIES

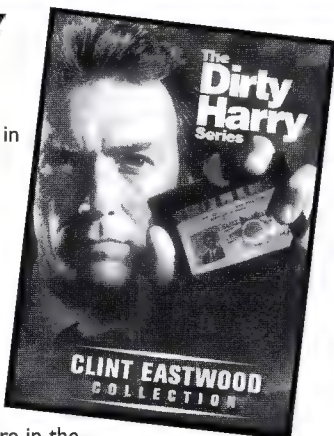
Warner Home Video

Here at last is the complete Harry Callahan saga. All five films in the series are now available on DVD as a boxed set or as individual DVDs.

The original film has been remastered and contains an all-new 30th anniversary documentary as well the 1971 documentary.

My only gripe is the usual cheap Warner Brothers packaging. But in this case, I will just have to live with it.

So if it's urban mayhem you're in the mood for, then this is a sure fire must have.



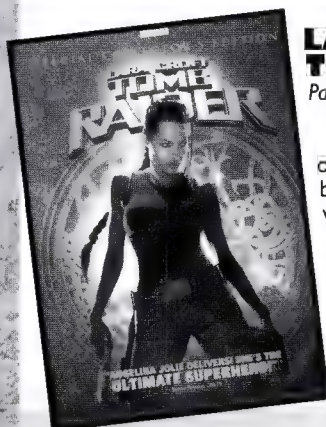
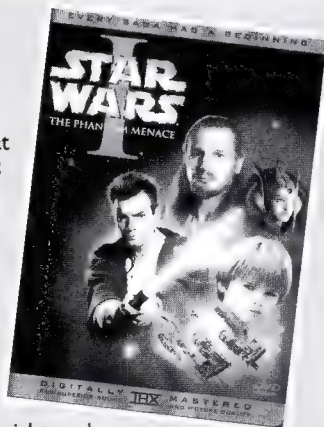
STAR WARS I THE PHANTOM MENACE

Fox Home Video

Does anyone really like this film? I found that there are few neat effects sequences but as a whole, it doesn't match up to the original three films.

One thing is for sure. If you are a Star Wars fan, then you will be in heaven. This two-disk set contains all kinds of goodies for you guys. Too much to list here.

The sound and picture quality are superb and if you play this DVD through a good sound system, then the experience is really heightened.



LARA CROFT TOMB RAIDER

Paramount Home Video

This was a fun movie! I know a lot of you hated it, but my creative juices began to flow every time Angelina Jolie was in action. Hum!

This disk is loaded with all kinds of fun extras. Documentaries, deleted scenes and even a U2 music mix.

This is a loud film that will shake any living room when played through a decent sound system.

I loved it!

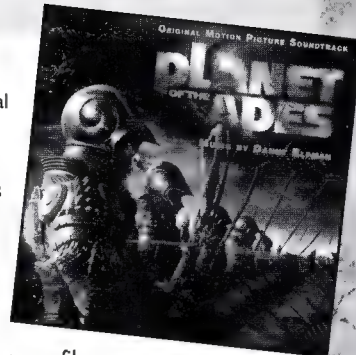
PLANET OF THE APES

Composed by Danny Elfman Sony Classical
www.planetoftheapesmusic.com

Veteran film composer and favorite of director Tim Burton, Danny Elfman gives us a different sound to the world of the apes. There are some pretty good cues here including the opening theme. This 58-minute CD contains 15 tracks of simian style music.

There is not much in the way of composer or film information in the foldout insert that comes with the CD, but there are a number of stills from the film.

I liked this score a lot even though the film itself was less interesting.

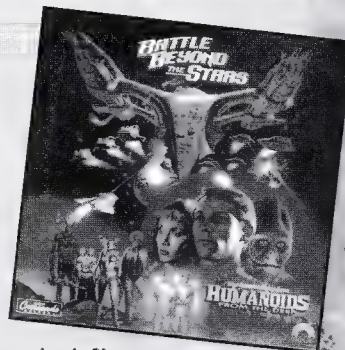


BATTLE BEYOND THE STARS/HUMANIDS FROM THE DEEP

Composed by James Horner GNP Crescendo Records
www.gnpscrescendo.com

This is a great treat to the ears. Two full scores on one CD by James Horner featuring some of his early work before he reached the limelight.

The 8-page booklet has all the information you need to know on these movies and the composer as well as color stills from both films. The disk contains over 76 minutes of music on 31 tracks. This score is a must have for Horner fans.



LORD OF THE RINGS

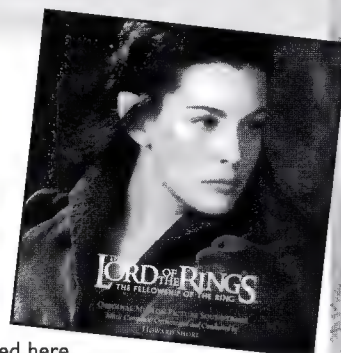
Composed by Howard Shore
Reprise Records

By the time you read this, "Lord of the Rings" will have already hit the theatres. Everybody's been yakking about it so we shall see.

The score to this film complements the type of movie this is. A magical, fantasy-filled epic type score is presented here.

A tenpage, fold out booklet is included that features notes on the score as well numerous color stills from the film.

Check this one out.



NEED SOMETHING TO SCULPT? HOW ABOUT KITS BASED ON THIS?

DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE

Anchor Bay Entertainment

Here is an overlooked subject and I do mean overlooked. The beautiful and stunning Martine Beswick who portrays Ralph Bates' alter ego, Miss Hyde.

This was a controversial film when it first came out back in 1971 due to subject matter of a man transforming into a woman. How delightful!

By the by, check out this DVD. This is not the butchered American version. A few more extended splats are featured here and there.



SHOWTIME!

Show Promoters: Please feel free to fax, e-mail or mail us information about your upcoming event and we'll post it here. Thanks! As room permits, information is placed on a "first-come, first-served" basis when received from promoters only. We do not search out this information.

• **If your show is not listed here, we either did not receive anything from your company or we did not receive it by this issue's cutoff date •**
Send all show information to: **Modeler's Resource, Showtime!, 4120 Douglas Blvd, #306-372, Granite Bay, CA 95746-5936 Fax: 916.784.8384 E-mail: modres@quiknet.com.** Information as published was submitted by the entity involved and if there are any discrepancies or inaccuracies, please contact that specific group or organization for clarification and/or correction. Modeler's Resource would request the individual submitting organization then notify Modeler's Resource of any corrections and/or changes they deem appropriate. We would then be pleased to publish any copy correction or adjustments.

• FEBRUARY 2002 •

• OLD DOMINION OPEN '02:

Scale Models & Figures Invitational Show & Contest, Richmond International Raceway, Richmond, VA. Registration 9am to 1pm, Adults: \$7 (includes 5 entries, \$10 unlimited entries), Juniors (17 and under: \$1). General Admission: \$5 (12 yrs and under: \$1). Contact: **Aaron Winer at: 804.270.7898 or 2427 Cedar Cone Dr., Richmond, VA 23233**

• MARCH •

• CENTURY-CON 2002:

will be held by the IPMS/Toledo Plastic Modelers on March 16, 2002 at Owens College in Perrysburg, Ohio. Visit our website for more information at <http://members.toast.net/toledo/plasticmodelers/>

• PENSACOLA FLORIDA The PANHANDLE MINIATURE FIGURE SOCIETY (PMFS):

is pleased to announce our Second Annual figure show will take place March 22-23, 2002, at the Holiday Inn Express, 6501 Pensacola Blvd. Pensacola Florida. For information on the show contact Scott Sheltz, P.O. Box 9431 Hurlburt Field FL 32544, phone (850) 939-3269 or e-mail at: flascuba2@ispchannel.com.

• EAST COAST HOBBY SHOW:

March 23-25, 2002 at Fort Washington Expo Center - Philadelphia, PA. Trade and Consumer Show. Our 2001 show was SOLD OUT. Limited exhibitor space is available for manufacturers, distributors, publishers on a first-come basis for 2002. Don't be left out - CALL NOW: 800-252-4747. www.hobbyshow.com. STILL ONLY \$695.00 PER BOOTH to reach over 1,500 retailers/buyers and 20,000 consumers!!

• APRIL •

• THE IPMS REGION 11 CONVENTION:

Saturday, April 13 - 14, 2002, hosted by IPMS SPACE COAST, will be held at the Elk's Lodge, SR 405, Titusville, FL. Registration 9:00 AM TO 7:00 PM 13 April. Awards presentation at 12:00 Noon, April 14th. For more information, contact **Mark Warthling, 3149 Brentwood Ln, Melbourne, FL 32934**, Tel: 321-253-3230 (Between 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM ONLY) or e-mail: mwar123@cs.com. Visit our website at: <http://home.cfl.rr.com/space-coast/home.html> Hotel: Days Inn KSC. Tel: 321-269-4480 or Toll free 1-877-767-3297. Mention IPMS Modelfest for Special Convention Rates.

• CHILLER THEATRE:

You've heard of this mega event. Twice a year. Catch it this coming April - Sheraton Meadowlands Plaza, East Rutherford, NJ. The walking zombies, model kits, scream queens, contests, film screenings, autograph sessions and everything else you've come to know and love will all be on hand! Call the **Chiller Hotline at 201.457.1991** for updated show information and guest lineup. Check them out on the Internet at: <http://chillertheatre.com/>

• MAY •

• THE 7th ANNUAL VERONA MODEL SHOW & CONTEST:

May 18, 2002, at Verona Middle School, Hwy M, Verona, WI. This year's theme is the '70s. Anything to do with the disco decade is eligible. For more information, please contact: **Jim Turek, 2639 Country View Ct., Monroe, WI 53566 • e-mail: jjtmodel@yahoo.com • Tel: 608.329.7222**

• SEPTEMBER •

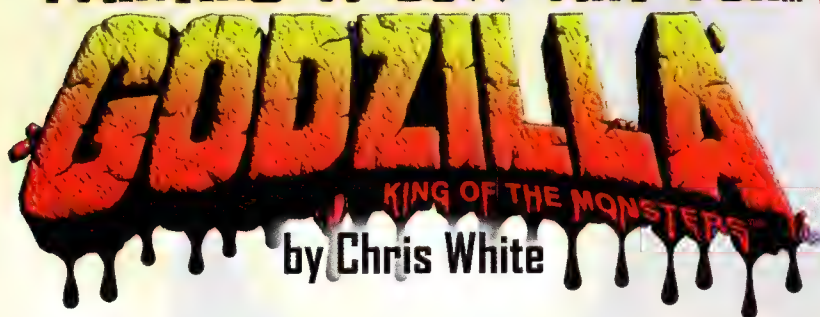
• THE INTERNATIONAL MODEL & HOBBY EXPO (RCHTA):

The largest Model and Hobby Show in North America, opens exclusively for trade September 5th and 6th, 2002. The doors open to the public September 7th and 8th, 2002. There will be nearly 400 exhibitors from 38 countries stretched across 225,000 square feet. More than 50% of the distributors from this year's show were from outside the United States; this makes an important statement about the significance of this show. The show will commence at Donald E. Stephen's Convention Center in Rosemont, Illinois. For more information please contact: **Mary S. DeBaggis, msdebaggis@ihobbyexpo.com, RCHTA, 31632 North Ellis Drive, Unit 111, Volo, IL 60073, Phone: 847-740-1111, Fax: 847-740-1112.**

GODZILLA



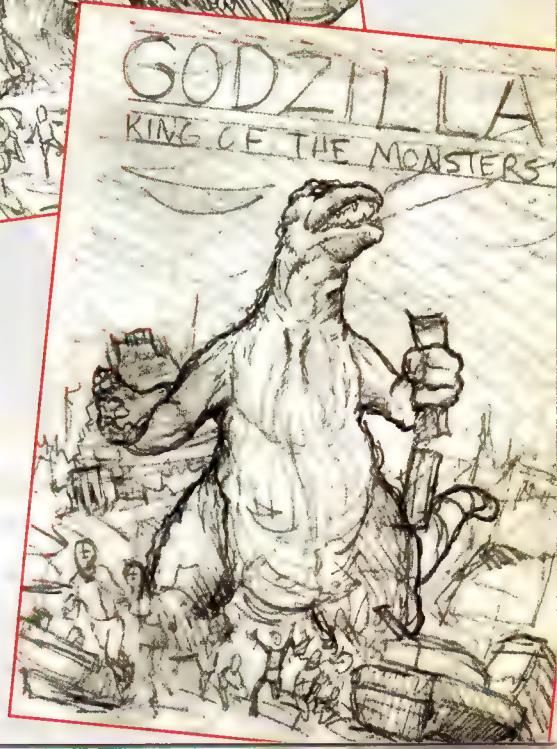
PAINTING A BOX ART FOR...



When Jerry Gustafson contacted me about doing the Godzilla cover painting, I was excited about the project, but my enthusiasm was tempered by the fact that at that time I had never actually seen a Godzilla movie. Of course I was well aware of the iconic monster, but the clips I had seen of the various Godzilla films usually featured a rubber-suited sumo display - I took my monsters seriously, thank you very much!

My talks with Jerry and Jim Groman gave me a better appreciation of the films, and also cemented the approach to be taken on the project. We would do the classic Godzilla, King of the monsters. I bought a videotape of the original film, which earned my respect thru the serious approach it took. I wanted to do the film justice.

The first things I submit to the company are verbal descriptions of the concepts suggesting theme, action, detail, and color scheme. We agreed upon an action scene at night with the body lit by spotlights. Jim sent me



his concept drawing of the sculpt, and as he worked on the sculpt I gathered reference photos, paintings, kits and books to see how Godzilla was handled in the past. As Jim sent me photos of the work in progress I started doing my own concept drawings for the cover. It was around this time that I came across images of some classic B-monster movies from the 1950s. What struck me was the use of primary colors and the consistent theme of destruction in the foreground, the monster towering overhead.

Starting my small, loose, thumbnail sketches, I tossed many ideas around. Should we see him from below, above or waist level? Should there be a detailed or clear background? I decided to take the cue from the movie posters I had seen. My painting would be homage to them, complete with utter chaos, running refugees...the works! I submitted a series of sketches to Jerry, and he recommended the top of Godzilla from one drawing on the body from another. I tried it and it worked fine.

I then did a more detailed drawing of the cover for a final OK, and got some more specific reference



Konga and Godzilla posters used for inspiration in creating the box art for this model.

for the foreground details. It was evident from the pictures that Jim was sending me, that while this was the classic Godzilla, it wasn't just a guy in a rubber suit. Jim gave Godzilla a muscular frame, making him more robust and believable...and alive. I followed suit with the drawing, fleshing out the folds and wrinkles.

When I told Jerry about wanting to use the bright color scheme complete with yellow/orange sky, he was less than enthusiastic, but allowed me the chance to argue the point. I did two color roughs, one with the sky as first discussed, one with the brighter color scheme I envisioned. He agreed that the contrast of the latter choice would stand out on the shelves more and allow for an exciting logo-type treatment.

With details agreed upon, I started the painting working at about 150% of the box size so that details would sharpen up when it is reduced. As it turns out, the final box size is quite a bit larger than a standard PL box so the percent of reduc-



tion is closer to 20%. The painting took about 4 weeks to finish working evenings and weekends (I work full time for the government during the day).

While Polar Lights wants the cover to honestly reflect the kit inside, they give me a tremendous amount of artistic license. All of Bama's and Kuntsler's work for the old Aurora floored me, but it was the covers that weren't verbatim images of the kit inside that especially appealed to me. Early on I told Dave Metzner, then head of PL's model kit division, that this was the approach I

wanted to take for my assignments, and he agreed. Jerry Gustafson has also allowed me to do the assignments this way and I am forever grateful.

What I especially enjoyed about this project was the feeling that we were a team. We were all committed to the kit, to make it the best possible for the customer. I hope you feel we succeeded.





Hi, my name is David. I made three models that are from DragonBallZ. It is an animated show on TV. Their names are Goku, Super Saiyan Trunks and Vegeta. Drangonballz is a show about humans from earth and other planets that have powers and they can fly. The planets Namek and Vegeta are where some of the people come from.

Goku is a dad and he has a son named Gohan. Goku has a wife and her name is Chichi. She is tough on Gohan and wants him to do his homework. Goku has a special power like all the other people on the team. Goku's special power is the Kamahamama, which is an exploding bulb of light, which he uses to kill his enemies. Goku is the second strongest out of all of the DragonballZ guys. It is weird because his son is stronger than he is and is the strongest out of all of them. Goku was the strongest before Gohan became the strongest. One time on Namek he was fighting Freza. (Freza is evil and very strong). He got really mad

and so he turned into a Super Saiyan, which is a very Powerful Being. He practically destroyed Freza. Goku almost got killed, but he survived. That is all I know about Goku.

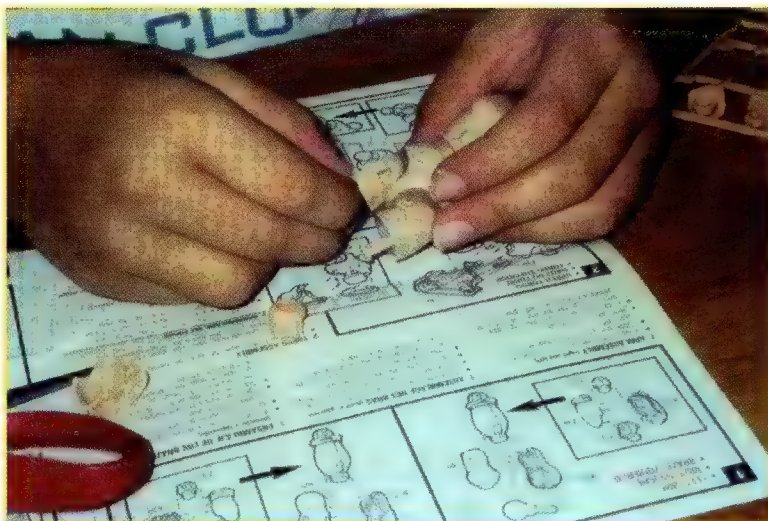
Super Saiyan Trunks is from the future. He is here for revenge because Cell, which is another very powerful evil being, killed his friends and his own dad! When Trunks came back from the future, Freza was there too and because of the battle, Freza is stronger than before. To make it even worse, Freza's dad was there and he's even stronger than Freza. Trunks had to slice him in half and then he killed Freza's dad. Trunks joined the team which include Gohan, Goku, Vegeta, Piccolo, Krillin, Choutsu and Yancha, and they did lots of battles together. They also beat Cell together and when he went back to the past, he was able to kill Cell. That is all I know about Trunks.

Vegeta is a tough guy. He wants to be the best out of all of them. He is also mean! His special power is Galigun, which is an exploding bulb of



light. The bulb of light kills his enemies. He expects others to be his enemies even when they are not. After Goku turned into a Super Saiyan, Vegeta toughened up in the gravity capsule and then he became a Super Saiyan. He got even stronger when he toughened up in the time chamber with Trunks before they fought Cell.

My dad thought it would take me



Following the instructions (above) and squeezing some of the smaller parts together with pliers.



about 4 minutes to build these models because they were snap kits. It took me about an hour to do the first one because I didn't know what to do, but the others did not take that long. They have joints that move, making it harder to put together and the pieces had to be squished together with pliers to make them hold together all the way. What is cool is that they come with changeable hair that you can take off and give to the other characters. They also come with clothes that are a little hard to get on. You have to put the clothes on before the arms and head are put on like the directions say. They come already painted with the plastic in the color of their clothes and bodies and they have shoes, but no feet. The shoes just hook onto the end of their legs.

I really liked building these models because you can play with them after you are done. Most models can't be played with once they are built, but these are better because now they are action figures.



Next time Kids' Korner is published, we'll be highlighting the recently issued Polar Lights' Mystery Machine!

Hey Kids, want to see your article here? You can receive a one-year subscription to Modeler's Resource if we publish your article. Tell your parents to get the camera out and help you write an article for publication!

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Kits That Time Forgot

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Look! Up in the sky! It's a bird...it's a plane...it's...



SUPERMAN[®]

by Fred DeRuvo



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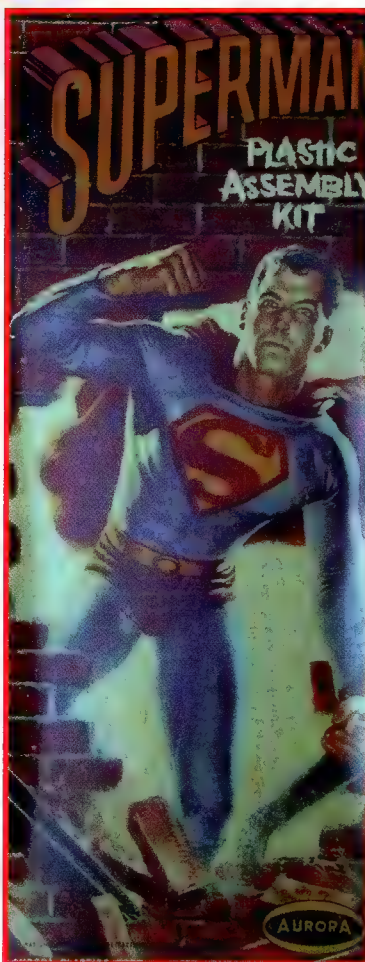
Welcome to another installment of Kits That Time Forgot! In this issue, I wanted to take a look back at another comic book hero that has been around seemingly forever and has at least as great a following, if not more so, than Batman™!

It's Not Really a Plane Folks

Who among our age group is not familiar with the words, "Look! Up in the sky! It's a bird! It's a plane! It's...Superman®! Superman is one awesomely cool superhero and we all know why. He can fly, he can see through things (except lead), has the ability to heat things with his vision, has super hearing and superhuman strength with more besides! Hey, what better way to impress the gals, huh?

A Brief History

In the early days of Superman's earthly existence, the only thing that could actually get to Superman's powers was Kryptonite, a substance from his home planet. Interestingly enough on Krypton, Superman was just as normal as you and me, except for the fact that his dad, Jor-El, was part of the upper echelon of super scientists and thinkers who arrived at some conclusions that were considered oddball, to say the least, by the other prominent members of his society. He believed that his planet, Krypton, was on a collision course and would eventually be destroyed. In fact, time was desperately running out. No



The Man of Steel's first incarnational. Shown is the original action packed Superman box art, from the Aurora Plastics Corporation.

one else believed him and he became anathema. However, that was a moot point because EVERYONE became extinct. Everyone, that is, except Superman (and Supergirl...but that's another story!). Actually, in a short amount of time, Jor-El's theories were proven true by the cataclysmic act of destruction that prevailed upon his planet anyway, but by then, it was similar to what it must have been like when the rains started coming down and Noah and his family had all safely gathered themselves in the ark!

Forethought and the instinct to survive caused Jor-El to create a craft that would hurl his only begotten son far and away from planet Krypton. He would be the only survivor (or so it was thought) and this little child would be whisked across the universe toward a planet where he would enjoy the benefits of having super-powers!

Rocket Man

This rocket, carrying baby Superman (or Kal-El as he was known on Krypton), was found by a Kansas farming couple, Jonathan and Martha Kent shortly after it crash-landed. This childless couple decided to adopt the infant, at the insistence of Martha. Named Clark Kent, the child grew up in Smallville, Kansas, never knowing until much later on in life how his parents found him. He lived among them as one of his own, not knowing of his true identity or his Kryptonian origins.

Below: The latest preprinted statue from DC Direct based on Action Comics #252, introducing the Supergirl from Krypton! Shown to the right of that image is the cover of the comic book, upon which the prepaInt is based.

Clark's special abilities began to come to the fore at age eight when he was unhurt after being trampled by a bull. As Clark grew older, his Kryptonian body began developing the superhuman abilities mentioned above.

More Than a Comic

Fortunately for all who thrill at the prospect of Superman, created by Siegel and Shuster, we have been privy to much more than just the comic book and the many adventures contained within each new issue.



Models Please

Over the past number of years we have enjoyed many models and statues of this famous crime fighter. As with the article "Batman Fever," this article will not exhaustively list all products that are related to Superman. We will, however, highlight some that have come and gone and may now only be found at auctions, garage sales or in the company of a collector.

Thanks Be to Aurora

One cannot begin the journey without going back to the early 60s with the Aurora Plastics Corporation. I continue to think fondly of those times and I'm glad for them. Try as I might, I look at my ten-year-old son, whom I love dearly, but I can't relate to his immersion when I see him hooked on video games (at which he can spend hours, if his mother or I allowed it) on a TV screen with the latest one-dimensional images of DragonballZ™, Sonic™ or whatever is zooming across the screen dodging this or hitting that! And to think, I use to spend hours in my room building and painting models! Ah well...times certainly have changed, haven't they?

It's All in the Comic Book!

Comic books were the main sustenance we had when I was my son's age (that and Mad™ Magazine). The many adventures of Batman™, Superman™, Superboy™ or any number of other characters were enough to light the imagination within us. In fact, these characters were certainly real enough for us as youngsters and the fact that there were models made in their images was further testimony to that fact. We had them in our heads, we drew them in our notebooks when the teacher wasn't looking, and now we could build, paint and place them on our shelves in our

bedroom! Life was good and Aurora made it happen.

Styrene Superman

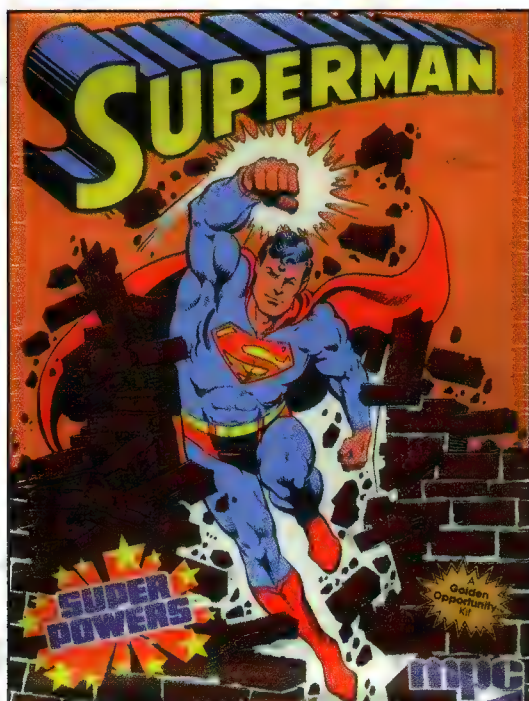
The styrene version of our hero Superman was introduced in 1965 by the folks from Aurora. Here he was, smashing through a brick wall and steel girders! The box art was beautiful and was very reminiscent of George Reeves, the actor who played Superman on a fairly long run TV program. Superman's cape was billowing up behind him and he was leaning into his punch. Looking at this kit from an adult's perspective, the only complaint I have is that the expression on Superman's face is a bit too placid. When you're a kid though, does it really matter? To have this model in your collection was fantastic!

Ch-ch-ch-Changes

Over the years, Superman, though not as famous as Batman (if the number and variety of models is any indication), had numerous incarnations produced by a variety of model companies. After Aurora created the original kit later in the 70s, this same company produced the Comic Scenes version, which came with decals instead of the sculpted "S" on Superman's chest and cape. The nameplate that had been included in the first issue was absent in this second issue and, like the other Comic Scenes kits in this line, a comic book was included which told the story of how Superman wound up crashing through this brick wall.

MPC Keeps It Going

A number of years later, a model company called MPC (by Fundimensions), leased the Superman and Batman molds, modified the heads and re-released Superman (and Batman) again with the byline, "Super Powers!" The art-



Above: The MPC version of the original Aurora Man of Steel™ kit released in the early 80s.

work on the box was more in line with the Superman of the day and was much more reminiscent of the drawing of the comic book style. Interestingly enough, the picture of the built and painted kit on the side panel of this box bore little resemblance to the actual head that accompanied the model inside.

Enter the Dragon

It wasn't until nearly 20 years later that another company, Horizon, headed by Shige Uchino, created a couple of new Superman models for the modeler. This first model was patterned after the Superman of the day that was much more buffed out and brawny, again reflecting the Superman of the comic book as he was then. Here he stood, fists on hips, cape billowing slightly in the wind, a guardian for justice and the American way of life. You either hated or loved this model. Personally, it didn't do much for me. The sculpting was superb; however, I have always liked my models to be more action-oriented. There was no action with this particular kit. Superman was just standing there, doing nothing, except looking good. Why wasn't he out saving some damsel in distress or fixing the bridge for a runaway train or foiling the bank robbery attempt of some underworld mobster?! Surely, crime had not come to an end? Surely there was more for Superman to do than simply stand around looking like he was ready for anything? I mean, really.

It's a Steel

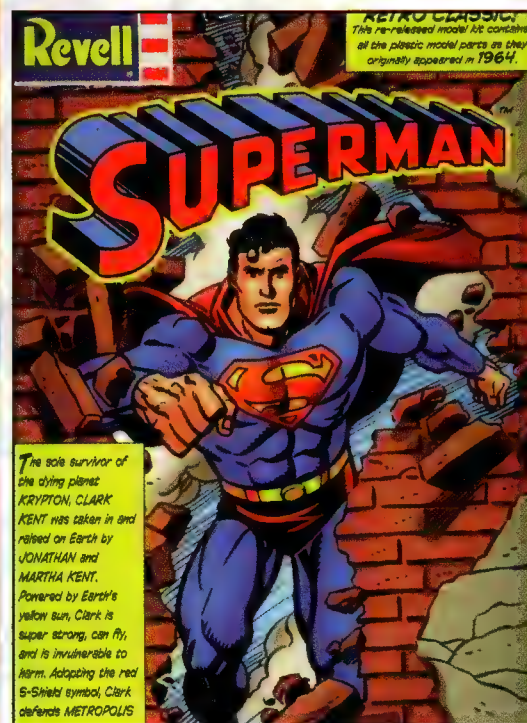
Not long after Horizon's version of Superman entered the picture, John Henry Irons (a.k.a. Steel), a Superman-like character, made his way into the model hall of fame. Recruited by the military industrial firm AmerTek, John Henry Irons designed advanced weapons systems, but

Comic Book Heroes

They've survived impossible odds and undertaken feats of super-human strength, faced unearthly dangers. The superheroes of the Comic World and favorites of adventure-lovers everywhere. Bring them into another world with Aurora. True action studies in full form! Each kit comes complete with a detailed, colorful, full-page adventure book to go with it!



Left Middle: Comic book ad for the then upcoming Aurora Superman kit!
Below: Revell's most recent reissue.



Below: A page from the 1970 Aurora Plastics Corporation model catalog, featuring a number of high profile comic book characters, including Superman and some of their crime-fighting vehicles.



had a change of heart when the deadliest of his creations fell into the wrong hands. Irons quit, destroyed his notes, and was immediately targeted for elimination by AmerTek. Irons assumed the identity of construction worker Henry Johnson and moved to Metropolis. There, Irons (as Johnson) soon met his destiny. When he was rescued from certain death by Superman, he told him, "I owe you my life," to which Superman replied, "Then make sure it counts for something." When Irons discovered his most lethal weapon design in the hands of street gangs, he was stirred by the admonition. He modified prototype flight-capable armor into a facsimile of Superman's costume, carrying on the legend as the Man of Steel (and later, simply Steel). Both of these models are extremely difficult to find today.

Well, Horizon went on to produce many other characters from the stables of DC and Marvel and did a very full line of Batman-related characters, but no more in the way of Superman was ever produced. Now, Horizon has relocated their company back to Japan and is presently involved in producing dinosaur-related models.

Prepaints & Statues

Unlike the limited amount of licensed models, there have been many licensed statues produced of Superman and Superman-related items. For those who watched weekly episodes of *Seinfeld*, one could see Jerry's affinity



for this particular character as a statue of Superman sat on the shelf in his living room! Looking closely at the refrigerator, the viewer could spot a Superman decal affixed to the door! Yep, Superman was everywhere, even on sitcoms.

One of the most interesting prepainted items I have seen in quite a while prompted me to lay out the \$195 to add it to my collection! The Superman and Supergirl limited edition, hand-painted, cold-cast porcelain statue representing Supergirl's introduction to comic book fans everywhere was, for me, a must-have! This statue, roughly 1/8 in scale and sculpted by Tim Bruckner, is absolutely beautiful! The expressions on both character's faces as well as the overall detail are superb. Like many of the models that have been produced, this truly is a work of art.

I'm sure we all have our favorite piece of art, whether it's a resin kit, a styrene model, a prepaint or a bronze statue. Superman shows no signs of aging or going away even though over the years, he has enjoyed a variety of incarnations.

Up, Up and Away!

Superman, what every boy yearned to be. The untouchable Man of Steel that was impervious to human weaponry almost always made the right decision and never used his powers for evil. The stuff that dreams are certainly made of, at least when I was a boy growing up in my small town.



The 7th Annual 2001 East Coast Hobby Show

with Tony Wootson

I attended this year's 2001 East Coast Hobby Show on Saturday, March 25th. MANNNN! What a BLAST!! (Also, what a MAJOR downer!)

The East Coast Hobby Show takes place once a year at the Fort Washington Expo, located in Fort Washington, PA, minutes away from Philadelphia, (<http://www.hobbyshow.com/>). The show was initially conceived as a way for hobby companies to showcase their wares, along with interfacing directly with other hobby companies.

However, over the years it has expanded into a weekend event that is opened to the public (allowing us to get a glimpse at cool products that will soon be released), followed by a trade show taking place the Monday after (which is attended exclusively by hobby companies).

There were thousands in attendance at Saturday's show. However, the only plastic model manufacturer was Tamiya. (This was the downer mentioned). There was a BIG NO-SHOW from all of the American Plastic Model Companies! I'm not sure if this can be attributed to a temporary dip in the American plastic kit output due to the economy, or to a dark sign of things to come. Time will tell, I guess.

In addition to there being poor coverage in the plastic model area, there were also a smaller number of modeling supply companies in attendance than usual. This is unfortunate, since these companies missed out on a GREAT opportunity to display their products to the more than 20,000 consumers that attended the weekend show. Also, they missed out interacting with another 1,500 retailers and buyers who attended Monday's trade show.

As previously mentioned, Tamiya was "In-Da-Hawse!" I got a chance to chat with several of their representatives, along with taking pictures of the rather small number of buildups on display. I also picked up a 2001 catalogue. I asked about new kits scheduled for release this year and was told that at that point in time, things were a bit hush-hush. The main reason was that in several weeks (on April 7 and 8) their TamiyaCon would take place (<http://www.tamiya.com/america/tcon/tamcon0.htm>). This is their big-time, yearly American event where they hold contests, conduct clinics, and roll out the red carpet for their newly released products (that had previously been announced at the Nuremberg Show in Germany). Since the associated built-up models could not be displayed at both shows, they opt to hold off displaying them until their TamiyaCon Show.

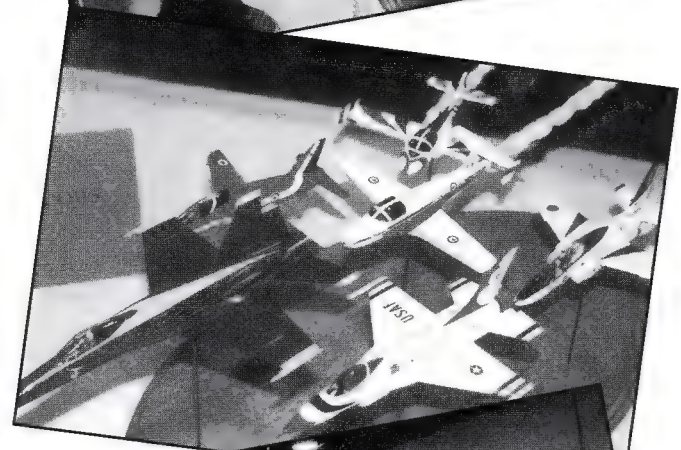
Another bright star (if you would) was Red Star Models (<http://www.redstarmodels.com/>). They are a new face on the scene, specializing in plastic, resin and card models and books from Poland and the former USSR.

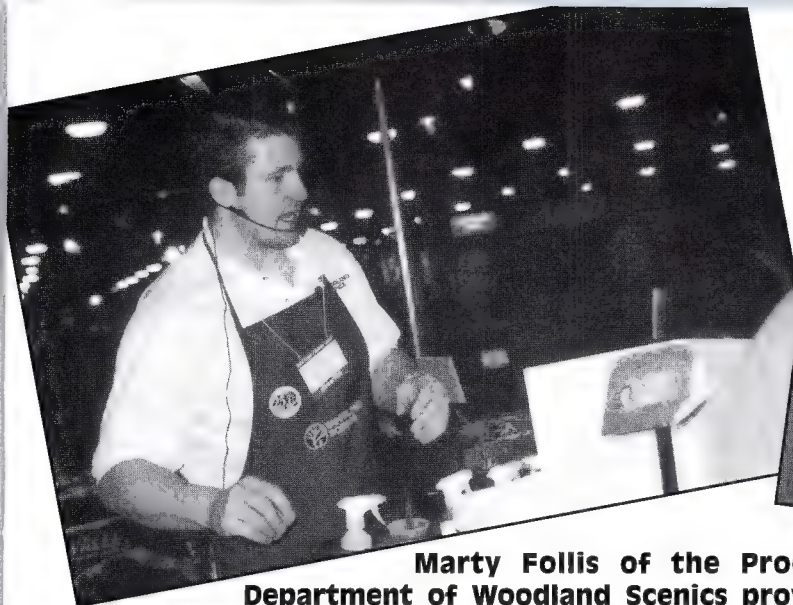
They had on display quite a few boxtops of different types of plastic kits from Poland and Russia. Since I was not able to view any of their plastic kits, I have no idea how good their fit or their detail was. However, it still was nice to see a new Plastic kit distributor.

Other modeling supply companies that were found at the show were Tenax, the "Space Weld" (liquid cement) company and Badger had also had booths, showing off their products.

Woodland Scenics had a very nice display. For those of you who are unaware, W.S. makes all sorts of very cool supplies for making scenes for Railroad setups. Their products have found their way into the mainstream plastic modeling hobby through use in dioramas. One of their representatives conducted a very informative clinic, in which he started with a Styrofoam hill and added all sorts of materials and liquids to come up with a very accurate, miniature hillside, complete with dirt, grass, shrubs and a tree. I was quite impressed with the ease in which the very realistic scene was created.

The ECHS had more railroad and RC setups and manufacturers than anything else. In addition, there were die cast cars, kites and toys, along





Marty Follis of the Product Development Department of Woodland Scenics provides a demonstration (above left); vendor tables loaded with models and product.

with a number of stores selling models and other hobby related items.

The NEPA Chapter of IPMS was on hand, conducting a very nice model contest. It was opened to all regardless of experience level. Jack Smith (NEPA's President) has been conducting these contests at the ECHS for some time now, in an attempt to expand interest in model building by allowing participants to showcase their talents, regardless of skill level, along with receiving awards for their entries.

The contest begins on Saturday, the models remain on display overnight and awards are given out on Sunday. (All told, there were roughly 90 models entered into this year's show, which was pretty impressive).

I attended Saturday's show partially to help out with the Make & Take IT program being held by two local IPMS Chapters. They were Bux-Mont and Delaware Valley Scale Modelers. This was the fourth year in a row that these two clubs have come together to conduct the M&TI.

The program was sponsored by IMMA, (The International Modeling Manufacturers of America, for those of you who were wondering). Members of IMMA donated the kits to be built.

The companies representing IMMA were AMT/Ertl, Academy, Accurate Miniatures, Lindberg, Marco Polo Import, Polar Lights, Revell/Monogram, Tamiya and The Testors Corporation. There were a total of 874 model kits that were received. Many different types of kits were on hand. There were 1:360 scale Tu-144's aircraft, donated by Academy. Revell supplied us with Pro finish Mad Firebird Funny Cars. Lindberg contributed Build-n-Play Hoppin' '64 Impala Lowriders. Polar Lights donated 1:25 scale snap-tite (Speed Racer) Mach 5's, Aurora dinosaurs (consisting of Tyrannosaurus Rexes, Pteradons and Triceratops), Crash Bandicoot Jet Board figures and a number of different Snap Draggins (cars).

The star of the MITI program though, was Tamiya and their 1:32 scale mini four-wheel drive battery operated model cars. These really stole the show! They are actually model kits that come with rubber tires, metal axels, plastic gears, a real engine and batteries (that were on loan). Heck, these mini-cars even come with grease for lubricating the moving parts. They are assembled by snapping most of the parts together, along with using screws for additional assembly. Once assembled, the batteries are inserted, the on/off switch is turned on and these bad-boys are off to the races, literally.

Much of the popularity of these cars stemmed from the fact that Tamiya set up a pretty impressive racing track in their area, made exclusively for these racers. In addition, Tamiya conducted

their own MITI program, helping kids to build these cars. This is the third year in a row that Tamiya had been donating these surprisingly inexpensive racers at the ECHS, along with helpers to assist with their assembly.

Okay, back to the MITI program. I arrived around 8 am, an hour before show began. Bux-Mont's Pres. (J. Baxter) and the guys coordinating the program (B. Nilsson and J. Rosado) had been there the previous evening setting things up, taking inventory of the kits on hand and making sure we would be ready to rock n' roll the next day.

Nine o'clock rolled around and the action began. Seats and table space had been set up to accommodate around 24 builders at a time. During most of the time I was there all of the chairs were occupied. (Who says kids won't or don't build models nowadays?)

Many of the children participating either had never built a model or had only built a couple previously. It was very rewarding seeing them (and their parents in many cases) roll up their sleeves (if they had any) and dive right into their models, exhibiting some extreme patience until their model kits were complete.

I worked with the kids until around 12:30, at which point I took a break, looked around a bit, and went to meet my wife, (who was arriving with our two sons). A (mere) hour and a half later they arrived and we proceeded back in.

We headed back to the IMMA M&TI program and began working on a model. (Which one, you ask?) The Tamiya 4-WD cars. Since my time was divided between helping my sons and assisting other kids who were building, it took us just under an hour to finish. Michael (the younger one) needed a good deal of assistance, while Anthony finished most of his by himself. It wasn't until later that I discovered that he had assembled a couple key items incorrectly.

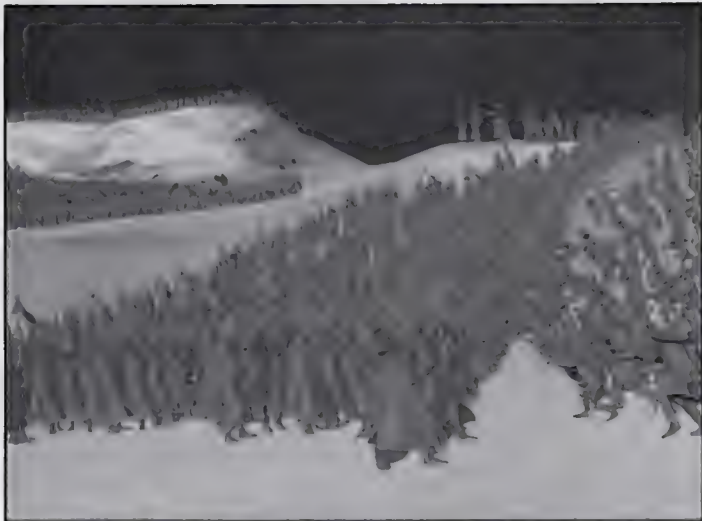
We then headed over to the Tamiya booth, borrowed some batteries and Michael raced his car. I spent 15 minutes troubleshooting Anthony's. After adjusting the gear attached to the engine, Anthony's vehicle was also speeding around the track.

It was now around 4 o'clock. I was bushed and my sons were hungry. We decided to call it a day and head home.

The final tally for our M&TI program was 432 models assembled on Saturday, along with another 442 reserved for Sunday's session!

Even though Saturday was a blur, I had fun, my sons had fun, and I'm sure all those who participated in the M&TI programs had fun as well!

The show was very enjoyable, despite little coverage in the plastic model kit area. A very good time was indeed had by all.



used for creating grasses and other vegetation. However, the material most used by far was polystyrene foam. As Alex described, "The basic material has been polystyrene foam because it's easy to handle and it's very light. Some of these things are so enormous that weight and portability becomes an issue. Most of them are built on a steel frame with wheels so they can be moved around. The steel gives the basic structure, then there are a couple of plywood bulkheads which forms the spine. That's all covered with sheets of foam glued together with A&B catalytic foam that will be built up to size and then cut back. Or, in the case of our rock sets (and most of our sets involve rock in one way or another), foam cast rock is used. They went out early on and found great examples of fractured rock in different sizes and made rubber mat molds of those, so they had sheets of rock that were pre-detailed because rock has no scale. Whether a mountain is a foot by a foot or a hundred feet by a hundred feet, it all pretty much looks the same. The closer you get, the more detail you see, but the detail repeats itself. So with a cast sheet of a 4x4 foot surface of rock, you can cut and paste many layers to get the surface and you don't have to sculpt so much because you've got the detail built in. Part way through they discovered another trick. Instead of casting the rocks in hard foam, they started using a flexible urethane foam, which gave the same advantage of great detail and texture. It's also flexible so you can bend it over a surface. If you're doing something like a cliff edge, you just bend it over the surface, tack it down and resculpt the edges. With the rigid foam you had to cut and paste and then resculpt all those cuts, which took more time and time is money."

Rocks make up a large part of the background in the film, but greens and plant life make an appearance as well and they present their own problems in miniature. "The principle place where we had to do a lot of trees and greens was Rivendell, which is in a deep valley filled with trees. So for that, Chuck Shuman (who was the Director of Photography on that sequence) opted to build trees. The basic Rivendell set was built in 1/14 scale and a lot of 1/14 scale trees were built where they had to be close to the set. That made them about ten inches tall and it's quite hard to build a convincing tree at that scale, but they did a beautiful job. Fortunately, there are some very unusual plants in New Zealand that make excellent tree bases. A plant called Manuca, for example, which has beautiful tiny leaves in almost perfect scale and, even though it's a bush, it has the structure of a tree. Then, to put the final touch of realism on it, the foreground trees were real trees, four to five feet high, in nursery pots. The beauty of that is when you shoot those on blue screen as a separate foreground element; you can put a little wind on them so the leaves flutter. You can't make the leaves move on the scale trees because they're very stiff. Since you have a foreground of trees where the leaves move and behind that are the miniatures, you've put the touch of belief on it."

As Director of Effects Photography, Alex faced many challenges, but one sequence in particular stands out in his mind. "The most complicated shot we've done so far is one we just completed for early on in the first film. It involves a flock of crows that are out scouting for the Fellowship and reports back to Saruman who is their

Left: The Massive technique is used to create the onslaught of Uruk-hai marching into battle.



Above: Gandalf (Ian McKellan) inside Bag End, Bilbo's home. Above Right: These Cave Troll images show how detail obtained from the original clay maquette with the 3D laser scanner is applied to the finished rendered cretaure as an extracted displacement map.

master. We follow the crows down through three different caverns, with the camera right in the middle of the flock. They swoop down the caverns and zoom up into a live action shot of Saruman where they swirl around his head, reporting on what they've seen. That shot involved sixty-six or sixty-seven different elements. It's a long shot, about thirty seconds. It starts at ground level looking at the fortress of Eisengard with Orthanc it's huge, black obsidian tower. Then the crows dive down through a hole in the ground and we dive down through the caverns. There are three completely separate cavern sets that have to be put together. It ends on a little bit of live action, which is just a couple of timbers and Saruman standing there doing his lines. That's all blue screen and that has to go into another miniature cavern set. It's a cool shot. There are no groundbreaking innovations, but it was very complicated to put together."

As with any film of this scale, innovations and new methods of accomplishing shots are created. Alex explains an advanced lighting system and other innovations developed for the unique needs of this film. "We've made a number of advances in miniature photography. A system built here by our electronics wizard, Chris Davidson, combines where the motion control system that moves the camera can also control flickering lights. So if you're doing an interior sequence that's lit by torches or fire, you can have individual channels that can control that flicker. Traditionally, we've had a very hard time doing that with the lighting desk we use to control these lights. Chris has designed an interface that lets the motion control drive the desk and that's a fantastic jump forward. He also designed the best smoke controller that anyone has ever built. Most of this stuff is done in the smoke because we have to create the illusion of depth or atmosphere. Even if it's not supposed to be a smoky atmosphere, you need it to push things in the distance a little further away. It's selective diffusion. That means that you have to put smoke into the stage and it has to be absolutely constant over long periods of time. Over the years many different ways of doing this have been tried, but Chris has come up with a method that actually works and it's a joy to have something we can actually use."

Even with all the work and preplanning that goes into creating a fantasy world, there's always room for flexibility and improvement. Alex explains how in the end, one

man's vision is the deciding factor in what finally ends up on film. "In many cases we'll have a set that's built and we'll get it in front of the camera and Peter will say, 'Let's change it in this way,' because he's a fantastic visionary and he has a remarkable understanding of what he wants to get out of these stories and get on the screen. When he sees something that could be made even better, he doesn't hesitate to change it. He says, 'Let's add a piece of mountain here and take this away; let's open this cavern up,' and we'll do it. It's truly interactive filmmaking in the way that if there's a change to be made, we'll do it and it's always an improvement."

Working on a film can be frustrating at times, but it can also be rewarding. Alex described what he felt was the best of his experiences working on *Lord of the Rings*, so far. "My favorite part is seeing the production illustrations that have been done for just about every shot in this movie, either the ones that Alan or John Howe have done in the past, or the ones done specifically for this movie and seeing how beautifully the set builders have interpreted those drawings. In many cases they're working just from a painting, not from a blueprint or a formal plan, yet they can just look at the painting and say 'I know what that rock looks like; I know what that building looks like.' They haven't even been built yet, but they have a wonderful level of detail. These miniatures are a treat to work with. They're among the best and most interesting I've ever dealt with."

Finally, looking toward the finished film, Alex spoke about the advances in photographic technology and how they have improved and enhanced his job as a Director of Photography. "There are so many things you can do today in terms of fixing things that you couldn't do even just a few years ago. You can fix a camera scratch or a flutter, things that are unavoidable in filming. all the way up to seeing things and saying 'We can make that better.' We can make it better, we can change a shadow and we can change the reflection in someone's eyes if we need to. It's just wonderful because that's the level of storytelling this particular story demands because there's so much depth and so much complexity."



• **Batman...Continued from page 22** •

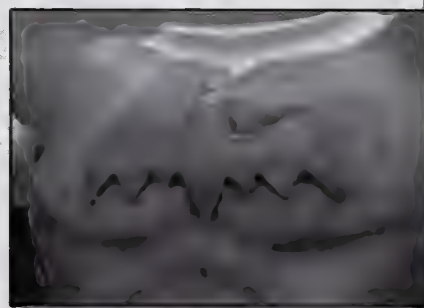
comic books, I began converting Batman's head. I liked the look of his ears and eyebrows being connected, so I planned on adding this to the new design. I began to remove his facial features. I removed eyebrows, eyes and then his mouth with my hobby knife, sanding everything smooth before starting the resculpting. To create a more symmetrical head I had to build up the right side of his brow/forehead area. This is very slight, but very important to get the eyes just right. Now I had a clean slate to sculpt that menacing Batman face. I drew on the new eyeholes before I began sculpting in the eyes, eyebrows and extensions that connect the ears. The nose was a little off symmetrically as well, so I balanced out the nose by slicing off a thin section on the right side. I also extended the tip of the nose and I raised the mask lines about 2mm higher. Sculpting a new mouth with a bit of a snarl first required adding putty between the nose and chin. I would now have a foundation on which to add the lips. Making two small lines of putty, I first sculpted the lower then the upper lip. I find by starting with the lower lip, it's easier to establish the shape of the upper lip. To achieve a more menacing appearance, I squared off the jaw and built a more pronounced chin and added to the cheekbones. After allowing the head to dry, I lightly sanded and hit it with primer. This is where you can really see how well or how badly you did. For the small touch-ups, use a glazing putty to fill in small pinholes and cracks. I have been using thinned Aves; however, I think the glazing putty works better. After doing all the touch-up work, go back and repeat all the steps if necessary. Which in my case is always the case, LOL!

Resculpting Batman:

As mentioned earlier, Batman's arms and legs are almost equal in size. I added mass to the thighs and calves, sculpting in the muscle separation with a triangle-shaped sculpting tool. Next, I added more details to the chest and abdominal area. I actually added very little putty to the chest and abdominal muscles, just enough so the muscles were defined. I made the Bat logo on his chest by first making a full size drawing on paper and reducing it in my computer. Using the reduction, I traced it onto his chest. I then simply filled in the design with putty, cleaned up the edges with a hobby knife and smoothed the surface with a wet finger. After it dried, I sanded the logo with 150-grain sandpaper.

The Batline Gun:

I scratchbuilt the Batline gun using 3/16" and 1/2" square stock tubing and .060 x .250 strip styrene. I superglued two, 1/4" pieces of 3/16" square tubing onto a 3/4" piece of 1/2" square tub-



Chest emblem/gun detail.



ing. I cut a notch into the bottom of the 3/16" tubing and inserted a 3/4" piece of .060 x .250 into it. Next, I cut a hole between the middle fingers on Batman's hand and inserted and superglued the piece in place. For the handles, I cut both ends of Batman's hand open and inserted a 3/4" piece of .060 x .250 and superglued them in place.

Batman's utility belt:

The Batman's utility belt was scratchbuilt from .015 thick Styrene, 100 half round and .030 x .080" strip. I removed the utility belt that was on the figure and superglued a 3/8" wide .015 thick strip of styrene onto his waist. Using the 100 half rounds, I superglued these on about 1/4" apart. The belt buckle was cut from the .030 x .080 and superglued in place.

Robin:

Robin's only modification was his cape

I used heat to reshape the cape area that would meet around his neck and upper back so it would lie down against his body.

Batman's Cape:

I am very excited about sharing this technique with all *Modeler's Resource* readers. I don't know how many times I've been to the modeling bulletin boards on the web and read this question. How can I make a good-looking cape? Capes are definitely a problem for many figure modelers. If a cape is close to the figure, it's pretty easy; it can be sculpted as part of the figure. But what if you want a free-flowing cape? How to sculpt a cape without support? After thinking on this for about a month into the Batman conversion, it hit me! Make a buck to form the cape over! I remembered reading in a car-modeling magazine some years back, an article about forming a brass car hood over a wooden buck!

At first I thought about carving it in wood like basswood. The more I thought about the time it would take to carve, I knew I had to find another material. Balsa Foam was the perfect answer to the problem. I quickly called on the phone and placed an order for a block at Doll and Hobby shop.

I first made a sketch of the cape on paper with the Batman model resting on it for the right proportions. Now I had the correct size to work with. I carved the cape into the 9"x12"x2" block of Balsa Foam™. However, I would recommend you use Balsa Foam II or III, as these are better suited for carving. I used a small set of wood carving tools and a X-Acto #5 handle with a #25 blade. Preparing a tabletop that I would roll out the Aves putty on, I taped a piece of 12x12 inch plastic wrap to a tabletop, taping all four sides. I then coated it with Vaseline™. I placed another sheet on top of it and taped only the backside. Mixing up a large ball of Aves (more than enough to cover the Balsa Foam buck), I flattened the ball out like dough, placing it between the two plastic sheets. Using a baker's rolling pin, I rolled out the putty to be almost as large as the plastic sheet. I was happy with the size and thinness (about 1/16"). It's important to have the sheet of putty to be as even as possible. Removing the top sheet of plastic wrap, I cut the bottom layer of plastic wrap around the outside edge. Now I could lift the Aves and drape it over the buck, which I first coated with a generous layer of Vaseline™ with a soft paintbrush. With the plastic wrap on, I worked the Aves into the buck with my fingers while smoothing over the top as best I could. Once I had it worked into the buck, I cut off any extra putty from the edges and added putty to any thin areas. I let it cure for a couple of hours and then carefully removed it from the

buck. You want to let it cure until it is hard enough to hold its shape but still pliable enough to break it free without harming the cape. Once it was free of the buck, I sat it back on top for support. I continued to let it cure overnight before starting the cleanup work on it. I added longer tips to each tip on the cape, sculpting on the front portion that fits around Batman's neck. I coated Batman with Vaseline around the shoulders and applied the putty, blending the putty into the cape. I sculpted in the detail folds and creases. I let this cure until it was hard enough to hold its shape before removing it from Batman. I then sanded the entire cape first with 80, 100, 150 and 200 sandpaper to get it as smooth as possible. This may sound like a lot of work, but the results are well worth it. I feel this is my best cape to date.

Well, that wraps it up for this segment of the Batman conversion. Stay tuned for the next exciting episode! Only in *Modeler's Resource* where you will find Batman and Robin taking on the Joker!

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Until next time, Kitman.



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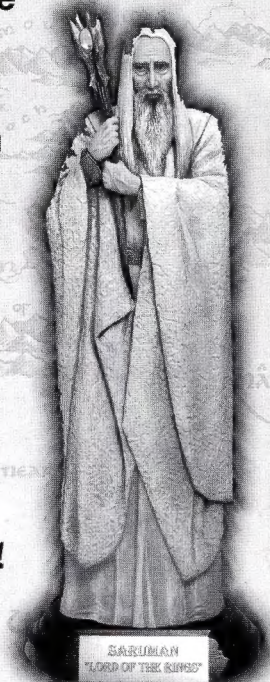
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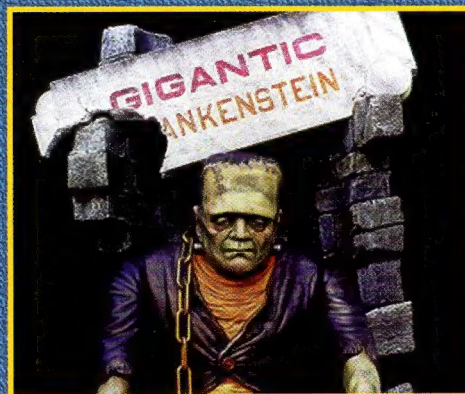
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From the Lair of the Craftbeast...

Bill showcases his painting talent on the "B" side of modeling, with She-Creature from Earthbound Studios!

Across the Pond...

Andrew "Mad Dog" Hall is back with more happenings from over the water and through the woods...

Kits That Time Forgot...

Mark McGovern is back with a giant of a kit! Find out how he rendered Big Frankie!

Beastly Behemoths...

Bill is back with this column that features the Giant Tarantula and The Blob - two "B" movie favorites!

Land of the Giants' Spindrif!

We asked Dave Metzner to show us how to build and paint the upcoming Polar Lights kit that is just all too cool!

Shanghai Noon...

Jim Key takes us through the process of creating a miniature train for the Jackie Chan blockbuster!

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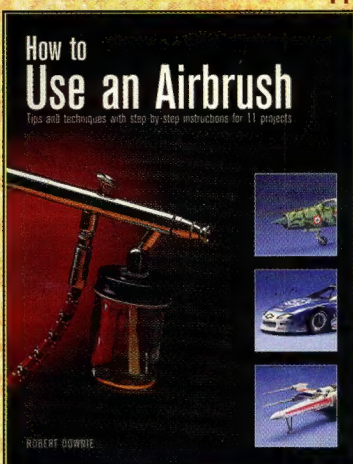
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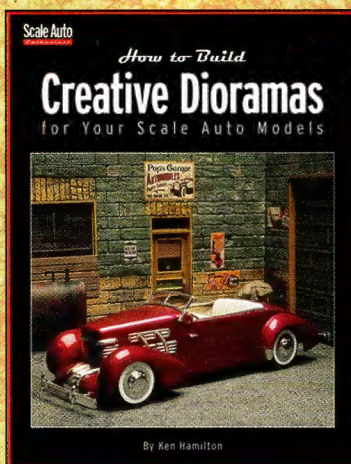
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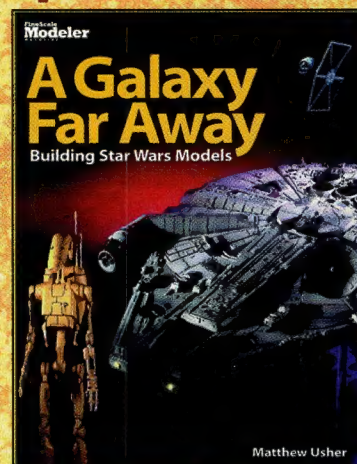
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